

*The Front Line  
of the  
Sunday School Movement*



*By F. W. Pelton, D. D.*



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The front line of the Sunday  
school movement





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of the

# Sunday School Movement

THE LINE OF THE VANGUARD OF SUNDAY  
SCHOOL PROGRESS, WITH A GLIMPSE  
OF IDEALS BEYOND

✓ BY

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THE FRONT LINE OF THE SUNDAY SCHOOL MOVEMENT

ENTERED AT STATIONERS' HALL, LONDON

## FOREWORD

WHEN my long-time friend the president of Bangor Theological Seminary requested me to give a course of Lectures on the Sunday School to the students, two reasons were especially influential in deciding me to accept his invitation.

The first was a desire to express in some degree the gratitude I owe to this Seminary for the training I received at its hands. Not the least of the providential blessings which have come unexpectedly into my life was the loving guidance which brought me to Bangor and its Theological Seminary.

I congratulate the Seminary for its high ideals, for setting them before the students and saying: "There is the portrait of the minister whom the churches need, and whom they want. He stands continually before you—study him; set your faces in that direction; the whole training of the seminary course is to help you to become that man."

I congratulate the students on their privilege of entering the ministry.

The greatest joy a life-work can bring belongs to the Preacher who preaches the Gospel because he loves the Gospel, loves its Giver, and loves his fellow-men.

The greatest joy of the Preacher is that, like his Master, he can also be a Teacher.

The greatest joy of the Teacher lies in the teaching of youth.

**The other reason** was a desire to express in book form some things that lay upon my heart.

One of the largest elements in the ideal of the Preacher, as of the Teacher, is the shepherding of the lambs of the flock ; and by learning how to shepherd the lambs he learns how to shepherd the whole flock. It has been said that if you convert an adult you convert a unit ; but if you convert a child you convert a multiplication table ; that the star of Bethlehem, the star of hope, still stands over the Child and the Home ; that "man was the conundrum of the eighteenth century, woman the conundrum of the nineteenth century," but the problem of the twentieth century is the child.

"Columbus," said Chauncey Depew, "was a dreamer, but he dreamt of new worlds. He was admiral of the ocean because he was made Christopher Columbus to carry Christ across the sea." Columbus found the new world of which he dreamed ; and it is through the child — the child in the Home, the child in the Sunday School, the child in the Church, that we whose work it is to be Christophers, bearers of the Christ to the children, shall find the new earth and new heavens of John's apocalyptic vision.

One of the chief dangers of the scholarly temperament as distinguished from the teaching temperament, and of young ministers fresh from their seminary studies, lies in the living, moving, and having their being in a different atmosphere from that in which their people live and move and have their being ; with different subjects of intellectual interest, seen from different standpoints and



with a different terminology. Their sermons are not, as is sometimes said, "over the heads of the people"; they are simply one side of them, outside of their sphere of interest and thought, on another plane, and therefore ineffective. Thus Ian Maclaren in the *British Weekly* describes "one of the chief futilities of the pulpit, — preaching on academic subjects, which interest the preacher very much and about which the people do not care one brass pin, or wearying himself with vain controversies which he thinks are most exciting, but which bore the people to death."

There is not the slightest danger of being too learned or too intellectual. The preacher, as the teacher, must gain all the knowledge he can, fill his treasure-house with things new and old, search every realm of thought for the very best, have the holiest and highest experiences, see the loftiest ideals; but his real business is to bring these things into contact with the daily life of his people, translate them into their vernacular, and adapt them to their needs. The choice little volume of Patterson Du Bois on *the Point of Contact in Teaching* is equally good for the preacher and the teacher.

Now the children are among the best means of getting at this "point of contact," through the Sunday School, through the Christian Endeavor Societies, Epworth Leagues, Young People's Unions, the Pastor's Class, the Home; just as it has been said that the "Kindergarten is the leaven that has been transforming all elementary education."

"The science of the century kneels by the cradle of the child."

"And a little child shall lead them."

If I were just entering upon my ministerial work, I would as a rule go to the Sunday School, and remain

through the session ; I would teach the classes of children rather than adult Bible classes ; I would not usually become the regular teacher of any one class, but would be a substitute teacher, teaching every class in the school as opportunity offered, thus becoming acquainted with every scholar in the most helpful way.

As I now look back over my uneventful life, more and more clearly does the Sunday School Work flow throughout its whole length like a river of light. Its tiniest rill in the mists of years gone by I still see in one of the earliest pictures my memory holds, as I behold myself a little boy of four years sitting beside my father, while he taught a class of young men in the old Brick Church in New York City.

One of nine children, brought up in an atmosphere intensely religious, literary and educational, both theoretical and practical, with a mother who had a gift for telling Bible stories, with plenty of manual training in my father's factory and garden, with Bible reading and prayer five times a day, with children always in my own family even till to-day, there has been at least an opportunity of knowing something about both children and the Bible.

Then I had some of the best academy teachers boys could enjoy, some experience in teaching in a boys' school and as school committee in village schools for many years.

Always teaching in the Sunday School, at times teaching the same lesson three or four times in a week to old and young, with growing Sunday Schools in each parish, where the authorities permitted me to experiment freely, I at length came to the time, twenty years ago, when I was compelled to make a choice between being the pastor

of a single church, or of giving myself up wholly to work for the Sunday School.

Since then that has been my life's work and joy. At home and abroad, through books and observation, through continual practice in teaching, through a study of every variety of school within my reach, through an unusual opportunity for acquaintance with Bible scholars and secular educators, I have tried with open mind and eyes to learn the best things for the Sunday School. The work itself has been my "Schools and Schoolmasters." I have tried to put in practice the theories I have held, unlike a good friend of mine who kept his watch with scientific exactness to the second, but was never known to be on time.

Therefore, what I bring in these lectures is peculiarly the outgrowth of experience gained through long years of study and observation and never ending toil. The book is almost an autobiography of one whose life has been spent in slowly climbing toward ideals not yet realized, and who is still climbing toward the distant goal.

No one can be more conscious than myself of how imperfect are the results, of what better things are near at hand, of the fact that all the results here given are but the lower steps of the golden stairway reaching into shining clouds which hide the unknown heights. May you

"read between the lines  
The finer grace of unfulfilled designs."

“Brethren, I count not myself yet to have apprehended, but one thing I do, forgetting the things which are behind, and stretching forward to the things which are before, I press on toward the goal unto the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.”

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“Domine Deus, quaecumque dixi de Tuo, agnoscant et tui. Si qua de meo, et Tu ignosce et tui.”

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“Τὰ παθήματα μαθήματα.”

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# THE FRONT LINE OF THE SUNDAY SCHOOL MOVEMENT

## I

### THE FRONT LINE

**The Front Line** of the Sunday School is the line formed by the best things which in its every department have been tried and proved successful. Not the best untested theories; not the loftiest millennial imaginings, not the brightest ideals for ideal circumstances, but the best things actually attained in some schools, the brightest ideals that have been made real, the actual encampments of the vanguard of the Sunday School army.

**The work of the Sunday School** is carried on under an almost infinite variety of circumstances,—in city and in country, in large schools and in small schools; in schools with every advantage money and talent can give, and in schools where poverty, ignorance, neglect, and opposition place every conceivable obstacle in the way; with every variety of talent, with different ideals, with diverse problems worked out with differing results, with emphasis on different methods, some having attained to great proficiency in one direction, others in another. All these

multiplied together in geometrical progression produce an endless variety of methods and results. The best of all these things form the Front Line.

**The greatest need of the Sunday Schools** as a whole is not the invention of new methods and theories, necessary as these are, but that they should all be made to see the Front Line, and that they should all begin their march up toward it. They often do not move on because they do not know the existence of good things toward which they might go, and which are easily within their reach.

Almost every Sunday School I visit has worked out something of value. But almost without exception there are things which other schools could teach them to their advantage if only they had their eyes open to the Front Line along the whole horizon.

A bright and most devoted superintendent of one of the largest and best-equipped Sunday Schools in London told me that he had been in that school as scholar, teacher, or superintendent almost all his life, and had rarely seen another school. His school, admirable as it was, told the same story. I have heard of other superintendents nearer home who have been equally faithful, whose praises have been sung to the same tune. While this may be safe for some men of remarkable genius, yet for the great body of superintendents it is a knell rather than a pæan. How are they to know what is best for their own schools unless they see what others have done; and how are they to train up successors unless they sometimes throw the burden on their assistants. The prayer for them and for most Sunday Schools is that of Elisha at Dothan: Lord, open Thou their eyes, that they may see —



“ See the helpers God has sent,  
And how Life's rugged mountain side  
Is white with many an angel tent.”

**The Power of the Front Line** is admirably illustrated by the Christian Endeavor Movement. Before that movement was begun, the training of the young people in the prayer meeting and church work was done chiefly by the individual pastor with little help from the experience of others. I well remember what hard work it was. Now every one, whether belonging to the Christian Endeavor, Epworth League, or the Union, or not, can have help from the experience of thousands of others in every part of the land. Books and papers reporting these experiences are an inspiration to better things ; and the fact that they have been tried and proved removes many objections which would otherwise obstruct their adoption.

**The most successful way of introducing a new measure** is to be able to say, “ This has been tried in place after place, and proved a success.” I remember well when I first stood at the foot of the Eiffel tower, and gazing up the dizzy height saw the elevators running up and down, a thousand feet, how I hesitated whether to trust myself to them. But when I learned that they had already carried thirteen million passengers without a single accident, I said to myself, “ This has been tested and proved thirteen million times ; I will trust myself to it without a question.”

Mr. Bryce, in his fair-minded and illuminating book on America, states that the best things in that wonderful and noble instrument, the Constitution of the United States, are the ones which had been previously tried in the state constitutions, and proved good by the test of experience ; while the least valuable portions were those

that were thought out for the first time at the assembly for the making of the constitution.

According to William T. Harris, United States Commissioner of Education:—

“It is only in the history of education that one sees the outcome of reforms, and can understand their strong and weak points. Nearly all present practices that have become established have a history of trials and experiments, and one who studies their growth in the past is taking the best way to discover what reforms should be taken up as the next best step in the present.

“It is not likely that more than five per cent of new experiments initiated in education will succeed in establishing themselves as of value to educational methods; the remaining ninety-five per cent will fail. It is so in new business ventures; . . . but the five per cent of new experiments which succeed may add, and do add, enough of value to compensate for the waste involved in the other ninety-five per cent of experiments. Even if we grant that of all criticisms and suggestions of reformers, only five per cent bring fruit in the form of experiments that prove anything either positive or negative, it still remains an important fact that criticisms and new experiments keep alive the work of education, just as in other matters.”

The Front Line is the record of this five per cent resultant from all experiments in improving the Sunday School. It is like the small Isaian “Remnant” sifted from the Jewish nation by conflict and trial, but which in the end was the means of realizing his prophecies of the New Nation.

**Cross-fertilization.**—In that most enlightening book, *The Ideal School*, by Preston W. Search, there is much

that is peculiarly applicable to those who are seeking the Ideal Sunday School.

He says : —

“There is scarcely a single feature of all these ideals presented, no matter how inaccessible they may seem, which is not supported by something tested and proven, to a greater or less degree, in the experience of Schools. If these fragments of success can be found, no matter how scattered, then an Ideal School is the direct product of their coördination in a single system.

“The ideal School will never be the product of any one person, nor will be of any one system, nor any one point of view.”

For as Mr. Search says again, “It is cross-fertilization and not grafting which has given us our richest varieties of fruits and flowers.”

This cross-fertilization, which has had such a development within the last few years as almost to revolutionize the progress of horticulture, is the method of the Front Line.

Great things have already been attained in various lines and various places, much more than is easily realized by those who are in the midst of the process, who do not remember the contrast between the best of the old and the best of the new in the midst of the conflict of the slowly dawning day.

“‘Oh, where is the sea?’ the fishes cried,  
As they swam the crystal clearness through.  
‘We’ve heard from of old of the ocean’s tide,  
And we long to look on the waters blue.  
The wise ones speak of the infinite sea;  
Oh, who can tell us if such there be?’”

This is almost universally the case in great moral and intellectual progress. It was for this reason the disciples were unable to recognize the "times and seasons" of the coming of the Kingdom of God. So Green's *Short History of the English People* shows that while in the Wars of the Roses the battles and contentions of the two parties filled the visible horizon that made the records of history, there was going on unnoticed at the time the mighty undercurrent which was the making of England.

**The Front Line is the best condition for further advancement.** The loftiest mountains do not rise abruptly from the plains, but out of table-lands and foothills. The great literature and art of Greece, the brilliant writings of the Augustan age, Shakespeare and Milton the great lights of the Elizabethan age, the best things of the world, have not grown out of ignorant, uncultured ages, but were mountain peaks rising out of intense literary activity, and eras of a revival of letters. Among a vast number of great and noble men, they towered above all, and overlook the centuries. What others did in the past made them possible.

It is said that once the elder Professor Silliman of Yale was sitting in the audience while his son was delivering a lecture, when an enthusiastic man close behind him whispered, "Why, he beats the old gent." The "old gent" turning toward him whispered in reply. "He ought to; he stands on my shoulders." The Present is so great because it stands on the shoulders of the Past. "We are heirs of all the ages."

Renan, not long before his death, said, "I fear that the work of the Twentieth Century will consist in taking out

of the waste-basket a multitude of excellent ideas which the Nineteenth Century has heedlessly thrown into it." That is true partly because in our eagerness after new things, we are apt to go to extremes and forget the other essentials which the past has evolved; and partly because the previous century had not climbed high enough to make it possible to realize its ideals, and materialize its visions. According to Professor Horne in his recent book on *The Philosophy of Education*, "Progress in knowledge of whatever kind must always come only from him who is already familiar with what has been done in his own field: In our universities scholars become abreast of their fields, they thus know where to begin original work, and so human knowledge grows."

Like the rower in a boat, we look backward that we may go forward.

The reason therefore for emphasizing the Front Line is not simply because of its immeasurable advantage to the Sunday Schools, but also because it is from this vantage-ground that the greatest progress in Sunday School work can be made. The object lessons of the best things already accomplished, made known throughout the whole Sunday School world, will continually suggest, to one or another, new and better things, to be proclaimed to all. There will thus be a steady, continuous, onward movement of the Front Line.

"The goal of yesterday shall become the starting-point of to-day."

From these Pisgah heights we can gaze upon the Promised Land of the Sunday School of the future. From these Bethels rises the dream ladder toward heaven with the angels of grace and glory upon it, and

“Still, through our paltry stir and strife,  
 Glows down the wished ideal,  
 And Longing moulds in clay what Life  
 Carves in the marble real.”

It is our business to see visions and dream dreams, as it was a necessary element in the progress of the early Church. To Renan's "At bottom every ideal is Utopia," a baseless dream, Martineau replies "At bottom every ideal is an inspiration." And Ruskin says: "Utopianism is one of the Devil's pet words . . . whenever you hear a man dissuading you from attempting to do well on the ground that perfection is Utopian, beware of that man."

For the best things you have ever done, your highest experiences, your greatest sacrifices, the noblest ecstasies of love, the seasons when your soul like Paul's has been lifted to the third heaven,—these are Front Lines of your life, keeping before you the ideals which are possible to you, and from which you can see visions beyond. Revivals of religion, fresh enthusiasms for education and for missions, new devotion to character and to Christ and to the Kingdom of God, are for the Church, as the greatest men and best deeds, the victories over wrong, the noblest enthusiasms of righteousness, are for the country, heights gained by some, and therefore inspirations for all, once attained and therefore to be attained again. Carlyle was right when in his *Frederick the Great* he said: "Once risen into this divine white heat of temper, *were it only for a season and not again*, it is henceforth considerable through all its remaining history. Nations are benefited for ages by being thrown once into divine white heat in this manner. And no nation that has not had such

divine paroxysms at any time is apt to come to much." Revival heights bless us evermore ; and when they have passed away, and we have come again into our ordinary routine, a new light still shines on the daily life, the level is higher, the ideal is nobler.

We will save ourselves from many an hour of discouragement, if we will keep in mind Matthew Arnold's separation of the hour of insight from the hours of labor.

" We cannot kindle when we will  
 The fire that in the heart resides ;  
 The spirit bloweth and is still,  
 In mystery our soul abides ;  
*But tasks in hours of insight willed  
 May be through hours of gloom fulfilled."*

The glimpses of the mountain top will come only now and then as we toil up the rocky slopes, through dark forests, but we know the summits are there, and every step is bringing us nearer the goal.

The whole world has been inspired, and moved upward and onward by the glorious visions of Isaiah, by the ideal of Christ as well as by the atoning power of his death, and by the pictures of the New Heavens and the New Earth revealed to John, toward which the world is ever moving more rapidly as each century rolls on.

In lesser degrees, but still with power, have the ideals of Plato's Republic, the Garden of the Hesperides of the Greeks, the New Atlantis, Richardson's City of Health, and all ideal pictures of the Golden Age, helped to hasten on the good time coming.

In the words of Maxwell, "No poet's dream has ever yet embodied the climax and consummation of human

capabilities ; but each new dream is a prophecy of the future, and is freshly watering the seeds of realization. It has been truly said, ‘The poetic idealism of to-day will be the prose reality of to-morrow.’ ”

The same truth is expressed in Mrs. Preston’s poem :  
 “God never permitted us to form a theory too beautiful for His power to make practical.”

“Men take the pure ideals of their souls,  
 And lock them fast away,  
 Nor ever dream that things so beautiful  
 Are fit for every day ;  
 So, counterfeits pass current in their lives,  
 And stones they give for bread ;  
 And starvingly and fearingly they walk  
 Through life, among the dead ;  
 Though never yet was pure ideal  
 Too fair for them to make the real.

“Thine early dreams, which came in ‘shapes of light,’  
 Came, bearing prophecy —  
 Commissioned sweetly to unfold  
 Thy possible to thee.  
 Fear not to build thine eyrie in the heights,  
 Bright with celestial day ;  
 And trust thyself unto thine inmost soul  
 In simple faith alway.  
 And God shall make divinely real  
 The highest forms of thy ideal.”

**All this, applies to the Sunday School** not only because it illustrates a principle but because for the most rapid progress of the Sunday School all agencies for education must move together, create an atmosphere, a trend, a current, all pressing toward the same great end,—the day school, the church, the home, the press, the young people’s



societies, the Christian associations of the colleges. One cannot do its best except in coöperation with the others. A dead church cannot long have a live Sunday School, for either the Sunday School will join the dead, or the church will become alive. Interest in secular education is sure to create interest in religious education ; and equally certain, yea, more powerfully, will deeper interest in the religious life and education of the young impart new interest to the day schools.

**One of the most hopeful signs of the times** is that feeling of unrest and criticism of the Sunday School, and dissatisfaction with things as they are, which may be characterized by the motto of an organization of men, referred to by one of the speakers at the first convention of the Religious Education Association, called The Restless Club : —

“ Anywhere but where we are.”

“ Nothing could be worse than this.”

“ The best is good enough for me.”

Any one who has been in close contact with educators and educational matters during the last ten or fifteen years, can recognize the truth of the description. Never before has there been such a conflict of opinions, such a storm of criticism, such a condemnation of the established order, such a whirl of new theories, such a battle of ideas, such a series of experiments. It seems as if there had returned to earth the spirit of the Greek god Momus, who found fault with everything in heaven above and the earth beneath, even with Venus because her golden slippers made so much noise when she walked. Every new scheme condemns the old. The next condemns them both. “ Whatever is wrong.”

Then we turn to the literature and listen to the critics of secular education, and hear what is said about our world-renowned Day Schools, and lo, the criticisms of the Sunday School are but a summer breeze compared with the storm hurled against secular education and its methods. It would not be fair or true to quote the Oriental proverb, "The dog barks, but the caravan passes on," for the critics and reformers are among the greatest and wisest men of the age. But it is true that the caravan must pass on till a better is prepared, the railroad must continue to carry its passengers till the new one is built.

**Now the first thing to be noted** concerning this state of things is, that it is apt to give a false impression, as if the storm-cloud were sweeping away the whole landscape instead of vitalizing and improving it. President Lincoln saw the fixed stars through the showers of meteors which the farmer thought presaged the end of all things. There has been and still is a wonderfully good work going on in Sunday School and day school, better work and with greater success than ever before. They had their part in making all the Christian men and educated men in the country. The sun has spots, some of them large enough to take in several worlds as large as ours, but the sun shines serenely on, bestowing its light and heat, creating power and beauty, as if no spot had ever been known.

**The other thing to be noted** is, that all this restless criticism means life, means that the Sunday School and day school are not dead, but living, not standing still, but marching side by side toward better things. They are not behind the age, only as the wind is behind the ship that makes it go, only as the sun is behind the dawn and

brings the day. They are in the vigor, and stir and change of springtime that promise summer flowers and autumn fruits.

“They must upward still and onward who would keep abreast of truth.

Lo, before us gleam her camp-fires ; we ourselves must Pilgrims be ;  
Launch our *Mayflower*, and steer boldly through the desperate winter  
sea,

Nor attempt the Future's portal with the Past's blood-rusted key.”

## II

### A BIRD'S-EYE VIEW OF SOME OF THE STRATEGIC POINTS OF THE SUNDAY SCHOOL FRONT LINE

BEFORE taking up in greater detail a few subjects which seem most important and are now receiving earnest discussion in Sunday School circles, I desire to stand by your side and show you, as in a panorama, the whole long Front Line of the Sunday School, the vanguard of its advancing army. At best the view will be imperfect; others, from different standpoints, will wish to add or subtract; and the line is continually changing so rapidly that new things have come within my vision since I began these lectures.

Still it is well to see as accurately as we can in one bird's-eye view what seem to be the best things as yet attained by the Sunday School, adopting as our own a toast given to Wellesley College, "May her ideals always be just beyond her grasp."

In seeking to bring the schools up to the Front Line, it is possible that some notes from the log-book of my experience may be of service in helping the reformer to avoid certain rocks on which more than one has been wrecked or suffered loss.

1. **It is wise to show the possible good** to be attained, and to lay but small emphasis upon the condemnation of the past.

Proctor the astronomer, in his *Familiar Science Studies*, relates the story of an Oriental potentate who "dreamt that all his teeth fell out, and when he was told that he was to lose all his relatives, he slew the indiscreet interpreter; but when another and cleverer interpreter told him that his dream promised long life, and that he would survive all his relatives, he made the man who thus pleasantly interpreted the omen many rich and handsome presents." Both counsellors said the same thing except that one pointed out the evil and the other the good. And you will find that very often the success or the failure of your plans for reforming men or Sunday Schools depends on whether you place your emphasis on the bad to be removed or on the good to be cherished; on the errors and mistakes of the past, or on the picture of better things; your back to the night and your face to the dawn.

2. **It is best not to make too sudden and revolutionary changes.** The opinions of most men are changed as a ship reverses its course by so large a circle that the passengers have no idea that they are sailing in exactly the opposite direction from that in which they started.

When I was expecting to preach in foreign lands, a wise missionary gave me this good advice, "Do not make any criticisms on what you see in the mission field for at least a year." That advice has stood by me ever since. It is good advice for every minister when he enters upon a new field.

3. **Be both conservative and radical,** but have a clear idea of what these terms really mean in practical life. A conservative is not one who merely stands still. He is not a mummy; he is not typified by Sancho Panza asleep

on his saddle, propped up by four sticks, while the robbers had driven his beast from under him. The conservative is one who moves along the regular roads, the beaten paths which the wise men of old have trod, and he can go as fast as he will. The radical is one who is seeking out new ways, exploring the forests for better paths, experimenting for something new and better. And though the pathway of progress is thickly strewn on either side with radical failures, yet the radicals are also continually showing us better ways, and when they are found, the conservative walks therein.

4. **Another great secret of success** in hastening the adoption of better things is found in hiding yourself behind the cause. Let others have the honor while you do the work; let others be the figurehead while you are the unseen screw that makes the ship go. There are those who never work earnestly unless they carry the flag at the head of the procession; let them carry it, while you secretly suggest the line of march. Work through the constituted authorities. The failure to do this has wrecked many a good cause. Keep yourself out of sight. Seek *first* the kingdom of God and its righteousness, and then all these things shall be added unto you.

In surveying the Sunday School world for the strategic points in its front line we would note:—

I. **That it is Open-minded to Everything Good.**—It desires to learn, it is seeking the best. As a whole the Sunday School does welcome every experiment and every effort to discover better things, and bids Godspeed to all the prophets who see the possibilities of the future, and are taking “advanced steps” toward their realization. The learned man wanted “I die learning” for the epitaph

on his tombstone. The Sunday School will have no tombstone, for its motto is "I live learning," or in the words of Paul burnt into his very soul: "Not that I have already obtained, or am already made perfect: but I press on, if so be that I may lay hold on that for which also I was laid hold on by Christ Jesus. Brethren, I count not myself yet to have laid hold; but one thing I do, forgetting the things which are behind, and stretching forward to the things which are before, I press on toward the goal unto the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."

**II. It is Well-balanced in its Progress.** — It is not like Dickens's Skitzlanders in that strange land, the peculiarity of which was that, while every person there was born physically perfect, yet at a certain age any part of the body which had not been used was lost entirely so that nearly every inhabitant was deformed.

The good Sunday School develops in every direction; it moves forward in every line of progress with equal step.

**III. It has One Great Aim: Conversion and Culture in the Christian Life and Character.** — It is vastly more than Zoroaster's doctrine that "the one thing needful is to do right." "All good thoughts, words, and works lead to paradise; all evil thoughts, words, and works lead to hell." It is first of all to lead the young to make their life choice of God and right; to inspire them through the life of Christ, through the cross of Christ, and through the Holy Spirit, with right principles, with a new heart, with a love to God with all the heart, and a love for their neighbor as for themselves.

Then follows the training into the perfect Christian life,

into the practice of every virtue, and in the best social service. The late Professor Davidson conceived of education as "the process of transforming the original nature of man into his ideal nature."

And everything in the school — the teacher, the teaching, the devotional exercises, the music, the reverential order, the organization, the giving — must focus on this end and aim.

IV. **It is a Bible School.** — A real school for the study of the Bible, as the divine means for attaining the aim of the Sunday School.

There are many instrumentalities, which in various degrees are seeking this end, but the Bible as an educating force is the principal one in the work of the Sunday School, and should be aided by everything that can illustrate and impress its truths.

This means real study.

It means a Bible in every scholar's hands.

It means the best methods of Bible study.

It means nearly everything in the Front Line of the Sunday School.

V. **It is a Bible School for the Whole Church.** — There is a familiar ideal, originating, in its form, with Bishop Vincent: —

"ALL THE CHURCH IN THE SUNDAY SCHOOL ;

"ALL THE SUNDAY SCHOOL IN THE CHURCH ;

"AND EVERYBODY IN BOTH."

Dr. C. R. Blackall, the wise and efficient editor of the Sunday School literature of the Baptist denomination, places, on the title-page of his capital little volume *Our Sunday School Work and how to do It*, a variation of this as his ideal: —



“A HOME SCHOOL AND MISSION FOR EVERY BAPTIST CHURCH ;

“EVERY MEMBER OF THE CHURCH IN THE SUNDAY SCHOOL SERVICE ;

“EVERY MEMBER OF THE SCHOOL IN THE CHURCH SERVICE ;

“ALL AND ALWAYS FOR JESUS CHRIST, OUR LORD AND KING.”

The Sunday School is the Church studying the Word of God.

The emphasis of the morning service is on the inspirational.

That of the Sunday School service is on the educational.

That of the evening service is on the evangelistic.

The Sunday School is primarily for the children. When Jesus laid his last threefold command on the penitent Peter, once he says “Shepherd my sheep,” but twice he emphasizes the young, “Feed my lambs,” “Feed my young sheep.”<sup>1</sup> The church can do no better than to use the same emphasis in its services.

But there is danger in making the school exclusively for the young. I have heard of a Parisian lady who had found the elixir of youth, and by using a few drops each day had retained her youthful beauty and vigor. But her maid found the elixir, and, taking a large draught, became a tiny child like Alice in Wonderland.

The whole adult membership needs the Sunday School. They need it for themselves ; need it for their own training and spiritual growth ; need it for the renovation and freshness of life which contact with the children gives ; need it for its home influence on the children.

<sup>1</sup> *ἀρνία*, lambs ; *πρόβατά*, sheep ; *προβάτιά*, *diminutive*, little sheep, young in years or in experience.

They are needed in the school to give it character and tone. They are needed as a means of retaining the young men and women under its influence.

Both children and adults will be better trained, better instructed, more deeply influenced, when all study the Bible together. Mr. J. W. Axtell in his *Organized Sunday School* declares that "the making of the Church roll and the Sunday School roll so nearly identical that the latter shall practically embrace the former, is the first condition of the very best type of school."

**VI. The Church will make the best possible provision for the needs of the children,** as the wise mother does in the household. At the Front Line, in the distribution of the finances, the needs of the children will never be neglected or scrimped. In the arrangement of the services the children will never be forgotten. Never will the Church or pastor let sermon or service trespass on the hour set apart for the children; never will they be willing to climb to their highest experiences on a ladder made of the losses of their children.

**VII. The Sunday Schools on the Front Line will have the best buildings, rooms, and apparatus** within reach of the Church. Everything that can aid in the work will be provided. See Chapter XI.

**VIII. The teachers will be chiefly from the members of the Church;** the choicest and the best people in it working for love. Thus they will be teaching by example seven days in the week what they teach in the school one hour a week. Except for some primary classes, and some special adult classes, nothing can be as good for the school or the Church as this plan. The Church needs it as much as the children. And for the children, no knowledge, no train-

ing in teachers from without, can weigh for one moment against a band of teachers selected from the best members in the Church for character-making power. See Chapter V.

**IX. The Teachers will be trained for their Work.** — The Educator will be Educated. He will be educated to accomplish the aim for which the Sunday School stands. He will be educated in character, in knowledge of the Bible, in the study of the child, in the art of teaching, and in the art of living. See Chapter V.

**X. Provision will be made by the Church for the Training of its Teachers.** — It will provide Reference Libraries, courses of lectures, normal classes, teachers' meetings; and, as far as possible, open the way for them to attend the institutes, conventions, lectures, classes, correspondence schools, and all means abundantly provided for this purpose.

This they will do the more willingly because the parents, the young people, and the community in general need these things almost as much as the teachers. See Chapter V.

**XI. The Teacher's Pastorate.** — Sunday School classes have been called "Little Parishes of Eight." Every good teacher is the pastor of his class. He has an unusual opportunity of giving to his class the shepherding which a pastor gives his flock. He can often gain the intimate confidence of the boys and girls, in some cases even more than parents can, and guide them with wise counsels. See Chapter III.

**XII. Organized Classes.** — Every class above the primary will be organized with regular officers, and be largely self-governing. It can thus do much practical work like the

Whatsoever Committee in the Junior Endeavor. The members can invite others that would naturally belong to their grade to join them, the social meetings giving a specially good opportunity for this purpose; they can supplement the Sunday School work by meeting on week-day evenings, with the stereoscopic pictures or special studies; they can give mutual help in various ways.

Especially among boys is the organized class of great value. One of the brightest of our younger Sunday School writers, Rev. William Byron Forbush, Ph.D., in his *Boy Problem*, gives some figures from a Questionnaire by Dr. Sheldon. Of the 1034 boys of ten to sixteen years, who responded, 851 were members of societies formed among themselves. "From 1022 papers collected there were reported 862 societies, more than half of which were athletic or game clubs," the greatest period of activity being between the ages of ten and fifteen. Older classes are organized in a different way, but are quite as useful and necessary. They look out for the sick, the stranger, the neglected. They carry the invitation, they arrange socials, they plan for mutual improvement and help.

**XIII. The classes** will usually consist of from six to ten scholars, except in the cases of the primary and the adult Bible classes, and those classes where some teacher has peculiar power of attracting and teaching. Many a teacher can succeed with six scholars who would fail with ten. Yet it is seldom wise to divide a class which has gathered around a teacher whose attraction has drawn the scholars to her.

**XIV. The study hour will not be less than forty minutes,** but in the younger classes there will probably be more

than one kind of lesson. To them belong the Supplemental Lessons.

**XV. The School will begin and end promptly.**—The opening exercises will never infringe on the study period. If for any reason something must be shortened, it will be something besides the study hour; that will be as sacred and unalterable as the laws of the Medes and Persians. Once a minister, coming to preach to a regiment of soldiers, saw this motto in large letters before him on the wall of the tent:—

“The New Beatitude: Blessed is he that is short for he shall be asked to come again.”

So on the successful Sunday School is written: Blessed is the superintendent that is short, and prompt, and businesslike, and does everything on time, for he shall be asked to serve again and again.

**XVI. The Devotional Exercises will be truly devotional,** producing the best possible atmosphere for the culture of the spiritual life, for the study and the practice of the Word of God. The forms of devotion, those that naturally express the devotional spirit, will be universal throughout the school. President Hopkins wisely taught his classes that where the natural forms of devotion are disregarded, the spirit of devotion itself will die. Closed eyes and bowed heads are essential during the prayers. “The Lord is in his holy temple, let all the earth keep silence before him.” Let every worldly thought and feeling be hushed, that “the still, small voice” of God may be heard. No one, however saintly, will be allowed to lead the Sunday School in prayer who does not express the devotional spirit, the longings and desires which children can feel, and enter into from the heart; for other-

wise he is not only tempting them to irreverence and discourtesy to God and his worship, but is training them into the hypocrisy of using forms without the spirit.

This is the time also when the most devotional portions of the Scripture shall become so familiar by continued repetition from Sunday to Sunday that they will become, like the Lord's Prayer, the natural medium for the expression of the religious feeling.

My long-time friend, the Rev. Alford A. Butler, D.D., Dean of the Faribault Episcopal Divinity School, gave at the Crypt Conference some wise advice which all denominations would do well to adapt to their own conditions.

"The worship of the Sunday School should train the children to understand and love the services of the Church. Yet some clergymen, ignorant of the first principles of pedagogy, do the opposite thing. They so plan their Sunday School worship as to educate the children to be unfamiliar with the Church's prayer and praise, and strangers to their devotional helpfulness. Do you wonder that such children drop out between Sunday School and Church?" On the other hand the spirit of worship will make the school "the house of God, and the gate of heaven."

**XVII. The School will be graded** both in material and in method, with distinct upward steps, and a final graduation, not out of the school, but into the great adult department where the scholars will pursue post-graduate courses till God calls them to his Heavenly Home. See Chapter VI.

**XVIII. The Regular Lessons** will be the continually improving and modified International Lessons, at least till some of the many active experimenters on the Front

Line shall see a vision and present a workable ideal of something better, not merely in certain directions but as a whole. For I have as yet seen none—even in the light of the present scientific child study and pedagogy—which combines so much of the best, with so few “outs,” as that system, with optional lessons for the children at the one end, and unlimited elective lessons for certain adult classes at the other, according to the latest plan. See Chapter VI.

**XIX. Supplemental Lessons and Reviews.**— Supplemental lessons are drills in condensed statements, and various things to be learned by heart, which are essential to the best understanding of the Bible, and of each separate lesson. They do not pertain to one system of lessons more than another. There is no conceivable system in which they are not needed. They keep in view the whole scheme of which each separate lesson is a part, and in which the lesson finds its place and unity. They belong chiefly to the lower grades, up to fourteen or fifteen years. They should be used in general exercises wherever possible. They should include summaries of geography, of history, of chronology, of biography, of facts about the Bible, of the great truths of Christianity, and of the distinctive doctrines of the denomination to which the school belongs.

Reviews, if made not a mere repetition of the detailed lessons, their titles and golden texts, or special teachings, but a broad view of the movement of the history, can accomplish a part of this purpose, but only a part. According to Professor Hamill, the review is “*the completion, test, and confirmation of teaching.*” The Review “is one of the seven essential conditions of all true teaching. Other

things being equal, he is the ablest and most successful teacher who secures from his pupils the most frequent, thorough, and interesting reviews."

**XX. The Sunday School will be a Part of a Great System of Coöperation.** — It will coöperate with the other departments of the Church in giving aid in lectures and educational classes; with the organized young people's societies in many directions. It will be in closest relations with parents and the home; with pastors' classes and with the work of the day school.

It will coöperate with other Sunday Schools; as, for instance, in taking a Sunday School census, so that no one can fail of receiving an invitation to some Sunday School; in teachers' meetings and normal classes; in an interchange of teachers of Bible classes and experts in different departments of Bible study. It will coöperate with the town libraries; as, for instance, in New York City and in the cities of Newton and Somerville (Mass.).

It will coöperate, both by personal attendance and financial support, with the great organized work of the International Committee in extending Sunday School interests throughout the state and the country; and with the Sunday School work of the Religious Education Association and all other organizations which aid the cause of Bible study.

Two coöperating with another two are much more than two and two; separate, single notes are sweet sounds, but single notes multiplied are an anthem; separate colors are lovely, but multiplied together they become a cathedral window.

One of the speakers in the Parliament of Religions relates the legend that "when Adam and Eve were turned



out of Eden, their earthly paradise, an angel smashed the gates, and the fragments, flying over the earth, are the precious stones." These stones, he says, were picked up by the various sects and philosophies, each claiming that "his own fragment alone was the true material out of which the Paradise Gates are made." By making all the Sunday School units "coöperant units," by blending together all the jewelled fragments scattered over the Sunday School world, there will at last be constructed the Paradise Gates to the Sunday School ideal.

**XXI. The Sunday School and the Home.**— Since the decline of morning and evening family prayers, the Sunday School is the most effective means of cultivating Bible study in the home. Where the whole family have the same lesson, they have a centre of attraction for Bible study, a supply of helps, increasing interest, a topic of conversation and discussion, of which there is now nothing to take the place.

It is especially valuable in introducing Bible study into families not connected with any Church.

A large part of Bible study at home is occasioned and stimulated by the necessity of teaching a class in the Sunday School, or of helping the children to prepare their lessons.

The home is the best place for children to learn the Bible by putting their Sunday School lessons in practice.

The principles which train teachers are almost equally valuable to parents for training their children.

The Daily Bible Readings which accompany each lesson are a great stimulus to Bible reading at home. Especially so is the great International Bible Reading Association of nearly one million members in all parts of the world,

having its fountain head in London, 57 Ludgate Hill, Mr. Charles Waters being its founder and Honorary Secretary.

Most of the ignorance of the Bible on the part of the young, of which so much has lately been said, lies at the door of the neglect of Bible reading in the home. If modern children read the Bible as I have told you I was trained to read it, there would not be much danger of those children failing in the Bible tests when they entered college. The Home will never be at its best till in each one is obeyed the Lord's command to Israel of old, concerning His Holy Words: "Thou shalt teach them diligently to thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine head, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes. And thou shalt write them upon the posts of thy house and on thy gates."

**XXII. A wide-awake Home Department** will always be an efficient agency of the Front Line Sunday School. Most schools cannot be on the Front Line without one. The Home Department idea was almost a stroke of genius. It is one of the most important developments of the Sunday School work which has appeared for many years, and the greatness of its possibilities, when the whole Sunday School world shall have come up to the Front Line of an efficient, well-worked, improved Home Department, has but begun to be realized.

The movement is increasing. There are already more than three hundred thousand members. Every year new schools adopt the plan. It is a tried and proved success. Its numbers should be added to the Sunday School roll.

It has been found that, in addition to its values to the Sunday School work, the social power of the Church can be increased by appointing prominent women of the Church to be visitors. They have a reason for visiting strangers, and a topic by which most easily they can introduce the work and the fellowship of the Church, and give the invitation to its services.

**XXIII. It will be a missionary school,** deeply interested in spreading the Gospel, widening the horizon even of the younger scholars, and building them up in an unselfish desire to help others. This is another field in which to put in practice the truths they have learned, and in which to join in the great work of the Church. The missionary interest is the saving of the Church, the enriching of the Church, the broadening of the Church. Thus we talk of the Broad Church and the Narrow Church. There are two infallible tests which, like Ithuriel's spear, pierce through all claims and names: Are you broad enough to take this life and the future life into your calculation; and are you broad enough to take the welfare of all men, far and near, of every race and name, into your labors, your giving, and your prayers?

**XXIV. It will be flexible,** adapting itself to all circumstances, of wealth or poverty, in city or in country, for family life or mission ground. Great success and usefulness can be obtained under the most adverse circumstances, if the work is inspired with the right spirit and a determination to do the best possible.

In the cemetery among the beautiful hills of Williamstown stands a monument to one of my college classmates. While wrestling in his freshman year he injured his knee. Lameness, pain, and ill-health were his guardian angels

through study and travel, till he became a professor in the college and a saintly man, whose face shone almost like that of Moses when he came from the presence of God. On that monument are carved the words which his life had wrought out : *Meine Trübsal war mein Glück*, My misfortune has been my good fortune, My trouble has been my blessing. This is a good motto for every Sunday School that works under disadvantages. It is possible for them to make it the expression of their whole experience, written in letters of heavenly gold, *Meine Trübsal war mein Glück*.

**XXV. The Front Line Sunday School will be interesting and enthusiastic.** — According to President Schurman “Interest is the greatest word in Education.” The Sunday School must be rendered interesting, or it will fail both in numbers and usefulness. This does not mean that its business is to please, to make things easy, to lay no burdens on the scholars. That is always a failure. It defeats itself. As Professor Horne well expresses it, “It is not a class-room vaudeville, it is an engrossing occupation; it is not an amusing entertainment of the pupils, it is a joyous attainment by the pupils; it is not play, it is attractive, compelling work; it is not pursuing the line of least resistance, it is discovering the line of greatest attraction. The true opposite of interest is not hard work, but drudgery.” It means that there is something worth while, something the child needs, something connected with his daily life, something which he wants to know or do. Boys are attracted to athletics, not because foot-ball and rowing and tennis and golf are easy, but because they are hard. Compare Ruskin’s wonderful words in the last chapter of the last volume of *Modern Painters*, where he pours out his very soul on fire with intensest feeling.

The subjects of study must, however, be so presented that they will not be drudgery, but will be so interesting that the scholars will love to study. "A good Teacher," says De Garmo, "can make the driest sort of material glow with life and interest." I once went nearly two hundred miles to hear President Harper, then a professor at Yale, teach Hebrew, in order to learn how to teach in the Sunday School. He taught Hebrew in so interesting a manner that he made its dry bones charm one like a story. He is the best language teacher I have ever known.

Everything about a Sunday School, from beginning to end, while never deviating in the least degree from its great purpose, never lessening its real work, should yet be so enthusiastic, so attractive, that it would be a punishment to a child to compel him to stay away.

**XXVI. The Front Line Sunday School will be an Evangelizing Power.** — It is the business of the Church to bring the Gospel within reach of every person in its community, and one of the three great agencies for this end, and not the least, is the Front Line Sunday School. You can reach parents through the children. You can bring the Bible and its words of life into the home through the children's Sunday School lessons. The superintendent of one of the largest Sunday Schools in the country said to me that he reached many mothers through the cradle roll.

No greater problem faces this country of ours than arises from the mighty inflow of peoples from every land under the sun; and the numbers who are so far away from the churches as to be only slightly touched by their influence. Some one has said that he who does not see the danger is blind, and he that is not willing to face it is a coward.

I thank God that he has brought these people to our doors where we can reach them, where we can put them under the best influence, and has said to us, "Educate, Christianize, these peoples or perish."

There is a great cry "America for Americans." Very well. I believe in "America for Americans," if you will interpret it aright; that is America to make Americans. We have the instrumentality and the power, and it is our business to turn every one that comes to our shores into a real, true, earnest, patriotic, loyal, Christian American. I heard once the motto given, "Our country, right or wrong"; and I still believe in that, if you will interpret it aright. "Our country, right or wrong"; if she is right, to keep her right; if she is wrong, to make her right. "*Our* country, right or wrong!" And every country, English or French, Chinese or Japanese, may say the same thing if they will.

Now the Sunday School is the right hand of the Church in this work. The children are the ones to carry the invitation to other children. The Sunday School should make a census of the field. From the town or city authorities can be found the name and address of every child between five and fifteen years old. It is easy to learn from each Sunday School which ones belong to its care. The residue can be seen and invited to go to whichever school they prefer.

As a rule it is better to make the one central school as attractive as possible, and then furnish transportation for those at a distance, than to sustain a separate school in a small neighborhood. This plan is becoming popular in the day school.

One of the real dangers in wanting a model school is

that it shall be made good by exclusion rather than by transformation, that it shall be like the Pharisee's feast, which failed of the blessing because to it were invited only "friends, brethren, kinsmen, rich neighbors." Jesus describes the model feast thus: "But when thou makest a feast, bid the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind, **and thou shalt be blessed.**" The model Sunday School is not one where, merely because others are excluded or unsought, all behavior is perfect, every scholar has his lesson, is always on time, and gives no trouble to his teacher. The model school is after the bad boy, the untrained girl, the disobedient child, the wayward and the erring, the poor, the spiritually blind. Thus only can it be blessed.

There was a period in my ministry when the Sunday evening meetings were thronged, not to hear me preach, for the meetings were simply well-organized prayer meetings; and among the young people came a number who disturbed the meeting, whispered during prayers, threw peanut shells, and made themselves a nuisance. It must be stopped; but how? One of my ministerial friends had driven nearly all his young people away from his meeting by scolding them for such conduct. This we would not do. Shut out the deacons, if need be, keep the saints at home, if you must, but never those who do not know enough to behave, for, if any one needs the prayer meeting or Sunday School, it is they. We cured the trouble in a very simple way, by offering a prize to the member of the day school who should write the best essay on how to behave in prayer meeting. For nearly two months I began every meeting with such an essay, and after the first one the meeting was so still and solemn that one of the

deacons said to me afterward that it seemed like a revival. The principal of the most perfect day school I have ever seen said to me that he never refused a boy because he was bad. *But he was not allowed to stay bad.* I heard a man in a convention say, "The larger the school, the larger the failure." True; provided it is a failure at all. But if a school does not get in everybody, if it is not welcoming even the publicans and sinners, as Christ did, it is more than a failure, it is a crime. "Not failure, but low aim is crime."

I have been presenting to you, as clearly as I can, some glimpses of the Front Line of Sunday School work. Dimly and imperfectly as it is seen, it is yet full of encouragement and hope. It is like the sunrise from my mountain home in the lovely White Mountain valley, where I am writing these words and am looking at the front line of the coming day. The sun is still behind the eastern hills; the darkness and light are having their battle in the valley below; the shadows linger, dark and dismal, in the ravines; the mists cover the course of the streams. But I know that the day is coming, because I can see the whole circle of the western mountain tops glowing in the light of the rising sun.

John Fiske, in his *Critical Period of United States History*, tells a story of the stormy Constitutional Convention of 1789. On the back of the President's quaint, black arm-chair there was emblazoned a half sun, brilliant with gilded rays. As the meeting was breaking up and Washington arose, Franklin pointed to the chair and made it the text for a prophecy. "As I have been sitting here all these weeks," he said, "I have often wondered whether yonder sun was rising or setting. But now I know that it is a rising sun."



I have long looked at the Sunday School. I know something of its darkness, its difficulties, its discouragements, its comparisons with the day schools. There are those who look only at its shadows, whose eyes are fixed on its failures, on the slowness of its development compared with its ideals, who "expect the Sunday School work to advance with strides befitting a Hiawatha removing obstructions as by a blow from his magical mittens," who have never learned "Phillips Brooks's winning combination — 'Certainty of final issue and patience with the lingering means.'" These can say hard things without number and with truth. And usually they do it sincerely, in order to spur us on to labor and pray and wait as "they that watch for the morning."

But whosoever looks at the actual Front Line, who sees the light on the mountain tops, knows that the Sunday School is not a setting but a rising sun.

The Day School has made wonderful advances, but the Sunday School has made more. Except the marvellous progress of the Christian Endeavor movement, meeting as it did a great hunger and need, I know of no educational movement that has made such rapid strides as the Sunday School in the last third of the last century. Where has there been in educational lines anything that has flashed out new light and new power all along the whole horizon like the International Lesson System thirty years ago. It met a great need, and it, with the best helps and methods connected with it, has ever since grown better with great rapidity. The whole country is organized for Sunday School progress and teacher-training. The press is busy aiding its work, with an output exceeding all periodicals except the daily newspapers. The great.

Religious Education Association is sustained by the most learned men in the country, who give their time and strength to it. Science is flashing new light on Bible study, and child study, and principles of teaching. The Bible League, the Young Men's Christian Associations, Chautauqua Assemblies, and Summer Schools have joined the great army of helpers. The colleges and universities are furnishing courses on the Bible and pedagogy. Every advance in secular education gives light and help and example; while many and many an experiment is made, on a larger or smaller scale, by practical men as well as by seers of visions and dreamers of dreams. All these mean that light is dawning all along the horizon.

“ Many times quailing, never once failing  
So the new day came out of the night.”

“ Day boils at last, and overflows the world.”

### III

#### THE TEACHER AND HIS CLASS

IT is Sunday morning, and I am on my way to the Sunday School to teach my class. As I walk slowly and thoughtfully along I ask myself certain questions. First of all : —

**What am I going for ? What do I propose to do ?** — One cannot hit a mark unless he has a mark. He will be like the famous Roman soldier who received a leather medal for missing the mark sixty consecutive times. Before the artist begins his work on a marble block he has a clear vision of just what he desires to accomplish, or every blow of his hammer might be a mistake. He whose work is the training and guiding of immortal souls needs to have a vision of what he wants each boy or girl in his class to become, and to make every lesson he teaches tell upon that result.

A professor in one of our largest institutions of learning, himself a very notable teacher, said to me the other day that one great mistake made by teachers was the failure to realize that teaching was a business, just as much a business as banking, or railroading, or manufacturing. Their business was to accomplish certain results with young people, and they failed in business if they failed to produce those results. The Sunday School teacher must say, as the young Jesus said to his parents, “Wist ye

not that I must be about my Father's business?" Therefore I make clear in my mind what is the business I am to do in my class to-day.

Again I say to myself:—

**I am only an Ordinary Person, and how can I do this Great Work?**—For what I am set to do is a great work and difficult. It is harder to learn how to teach than how to preach. There are more good scholars in the school of Demosthenes than in the school of Socrates. It is easier to preach with Emerson, "Hitch your wagon to a star," than to inspire and guide the boys in the process of hitching their own wagons to a star, even the Star of Bethlehem. How I used to dislike biographies because most of them were written in the easy way of telling what their subjects had become, but failed in the teaching element of showing how these men—

"Toiled along the climbing way  
With painful steps and slow."

I never enjoyed biography till I read Hugh Miller's *My Schools and Schoolmasters*, where he not only pictures the height attained, but shows us the "blazed trail" through the forest, the very steps by which he climbed the Hill Difficulty to the Palace Beautiful on the top.

But as I walk along some consoling thoughts come to me like the angel to Elijah under the juniper tree. I recall the saying of Bishop Phillips Brooks, that "the larger part of the Christian work through which the Millennial days are coming, is done not by the people of ten talents, but by those of one or two talents faithfully used."

Then I recall the saying that "a little man with a great Gospel is greater than a great man with a little Gospel."

I may have but few talents but I have a great Gospel, and the might of the Holy Spirit is mine,—the same powers which, through imperfect men, common fishermen and their successors, have wrought wonders and victories to which, in all secular history, there is no parallel. Those powers are mine for the work I am to do with my class, and I am comforted.

Naturally follows the next question : —

**Am I Prepared ?**—You might as well bombard Gibraltar with unloaded cannon, as teach a class when you are unprepared. The old comparison that the best of cannon and powder and shot, most carefully loaded, is useless unless touched with the fire, is true now and always ; but the converse is also true, that all the lightnings of heaven cannot fire off an unloaded gun.

I used to be indignant at my church members because one after another they refused to take a class when called unexpectedly from the Bible class or visitors' seats. How can good Christian men, the saints, the salt of the earth, refuse to teach a Sunday School class ! I wanted to launch all the thunderbolts of Sinai at them for their neglect of duty. But I changed my mind, and wanted to aim the thunderbolts at the officials who did not see to it that there was always on hand a supply of substitute teachers who were prepared. Of course in an emergency almost any one can take a class for once and make the service helpful to the children on some subject.

Dr. Schauffler wisely says : —

“When you have arrived at Saturday night you have reached this point : —

“Plan — Your — Work ! All the week you plan your work. When you come to Sunday School you, —

“Work —— Your —— Plan.”

But how can you “work your plan” unless you have “planned your work”!

I am not now speaking of that general preparation of knowledge and spirit and character to which Dr. Meyer refers when he says that the important question is not, “Is the sermon prepared?” but, “Is the man prepared?” but of the special preparation of the lesson for the day. Am I full of the subject? Am I satisfied with it? Has it taken possession of me till it has culminated in a tingling, controlled, poised enthusiasm for the truth I am to teach? Has my being been vitalized by it, till I have tried to practise it, or experience it as a part of my own life, till it seems the one thing to teach, the one message my whole soul yearns to give?

I am now drawing near the place, and I ask myself:—

**Who is My Assistant Teacher?**— One’s assistant teacher, according to a bright article by Mrs. Harris in the *Sunday School Times* several years ago, is his own *personal bearing, character, and example*.

One of the brightest of Edward Everett Hale’s immortal stories is “My Double and How He Undid Me.” Every teacher has his double, and it will either undo him or double him. It will double his power and influence, or it will undo him.

Who is your assistant teacher? What is he doing? What is his influence as he stands with you before the class?

Do you think that you can get your class to obey the superintendent’s bell if you do not obey it? If you keep on talking while he talks, will not they whisper while you are talking?

Do you think that you can get all the members of your class to sing if you do not sing?

Do you think that you can hold the attention of your class if you do not hold your own thought to the lesson?

Do you think that you can make your scholars prepare their lesson at home if they know that you come to the class without preparation?

Will they be prompt if you are not prompt?

Can you make your scholars bow their heads in prayer if you stare around the room during the time of devotion, as though you were ashamed to worship God, or even if you open your eyes to see whether they are closing theirs?

Never. You can never be successful with the class until your assistant teacher shall do and be exactly that which you wish your children to do and to be.

The "masterpiece of all eloquence" is the oration of Demosthenes when he pleaded before the Athenians that they should crown him because of his wise counsels and his deeds.

The next greatest oration in history is that of Æschines in his reply to Demosthenes, arguing that to crown one who had fled from battle, and by his counsels had brought the city to ruin, was to corrupt the young men by presenting such a bad example for their admiration. For, he says, "You know well it is not music, nor the gymnasium, nor the schools that mould young men; it is much more . . . the public example," it is the men you honor, the men for whom you vote, for the character of a city is determined by the character of the men it crowns."

And you will find that your assistant teacher is the great teacher of your class; and he has so much to do with your success, that at home, in your business, in your

class, everywhere, your assistant teacher and yourself must be at one, if you would be a successful teacher.

**The Greeting.**—And now I have reached the class a little early, and welcome each member of the class. My neighbor, Rev. Dr. F. E. Clark, “Father Endeavor,” has upon the porch of his house the word “Welcome” in twenty-three different languages in which Christian Endeavor Societies are formed. In every form in which language or action can express the feeling, we bid our class a welcome warm from the heart.

While the school is gathering, let us look around a little together and see **what tools we have to work with.** Look into our class room. Pictures give a homelike appearance to the room; a hat-tree is in one corner, and in another a shelf with Bibles and hymn-books. On one wall is a double, hinged blackboard, and by its side a home-made cornice containing maps and charts mounted on rollers. In the centre of the room is a table, around which the chairs are placed in a circle. In the drawer of the table are paper pads, chalk, pencils, small maps, quarterlies, charts, pictures.

Two or three articles are there from Palestine, which illustrate one point in the lesson. A couple of stereoscopes are on the table, with some choice stereographs of the scene in which our lesson story took place. The boys are studying there while we are looking around waiting for the session to open. There is a Bible for every boy, though we prefer that each should bring his own, together with his Quarterly.

Each boy has also a blank-book in which he places penny pictures of scenes in the Life of Christ, and is to write out a description of the scene when he reaches home.



But you ask what you would do if you could not have all these things. That is just the question I wanted you to ask. The description above is not a fancy picture, but a photograph of a room in an ordinary village church, and almost everything is, in some form, within the reach of most teachers. If you cannot have a room, screen off some corner of the large room; if you have no large maps, use the maps in the Quarterly; if you have no blackboard, you can get ten large sheets of paper for a cent; a table can be bought cheap, or you can make one; if you cannot buy penny pictures, cut them out of the papers or magazines; if you have no articles from Palestine, think up some simple object lesson to illustrate with, and you will find that even "pails, animals, waterpots, are glorified when set in signs of the Zodiac in the sky."

I think it was President Garfield who said that a log of wood in the forest, with President Hopkins on one end and a student on the other, was a college. All history is full of remarkable things done with the poorest tools and in the most unfavorable circumstances. I praise the Lord for it with all my heart.

But, mark you, this is *never* true of those who might have had better tools and were unwilling to take the pains and make the sacrifices necessary to obtain them. The one essential thing is the earnest spirit that realizes the importance of the work, that is willing to make sacrifices to get the best things possible to do it with, and then does its level best with what it has.

No Sunday School teacher in any circumstances, with this spirit, ever failed of success.

**The opening devotional service is over** and the teacher is alone with his class, even if he is in the main room sur-

rounded with other classes. We will not disturb him, but we will watch him closely, and after the school is dismissed we ask him questions about some things that puzzle us.

**First, about his use of Bibles and Quarterlies in the class.** We say to him, We notice that you, as teacher, and all your class, have both Quarterlies and Bibles open before you. But we have been told that this is all wrong. We know Sunday Schools where the "helps" are shut out entirely. They must be left at home. A great Sunday School convention passed resolutions to the effect that "the 'helps' and not the Bible are as a rule used both by teachers and scholars in the Sabbath School classes; and the consequence is [that] our Sabbath School children, while they read and learn a great deal about the Bible, do not grow up in that familiarity with the Bible itself which is essential to their becoming strong and steadfast Christians."

The teacher replies: I use both as the best way of growing up in familiarity with the Bible, the purpose these others are seeking. I have tried every possible way, and learned what I could from others, and I have settled down upon this plan. You will notice, however, that my Bible and Quarterly were lying on the table, and that I was so familiar with my lesson that for the most part I did not have to look at either. Many years ago I read a book on extempore preaching (Bautain's) of which I remember only two things, one of which has stood me in good stead ever since.

It is this: There are two mental processes in preaching and teaching; one, the main thought to be presented, the other, the subsidiary processes, like recalling the

thoughts and their order in extempore preaching, or remembering the words in reciting from memory, or keeping to the manuscript in reading.

Now each of these three methods, extempore, memorizing, and reading, can be made equally effective, *provided the subsidiary processes are unconscious*, so that the whole mind can be given unfettered, absolutely free, to the subject to be impressed. The same principle holds true of ease in writing when we spell automatically; and in music when the piano keys are struck without a conscious effort of will for each note.

Of course one of the lessons to be learned incidentally in the Sunday School is the use of the Bible; but the way to learn that is chiefly by continual references to it. The good Quarterly has many carefully selected references, and it is easier both for teacher and scholar to use the Quarterly for this purpose. If you trust to your memory alone you will make comparatively little use of the Bible. If you take pains to select references yourself at home, and note them down on paper which you bring to the class, then you simply use a little self-made Quarterly instead of the printed one.

Moreover the scripture in the Quarterly is as real Bible as if it were bound in the full Bible form; and in a form very convenient to use for some purposes. In the majority of cases, not only in other schemes but in the International Lessons, the whole of the lesson is not usually printed in the Quarterly, so that to study the whole lesson one must have his Bible; though some critics seem never to have recognized this fact although for the last ten years noted at the head of each lesson.

Again, the Quarterly is very convenient for reference

to maps and charts in the class and to its pictures. Then it is a great help in keeping teacher and class together to have the lesson scheme before them.

Although no good teacher ever confines himself to the printed questions, yet, in order to induce the class to study the lesson at home, some, at least, of the questions they study at home must be asked in the class.

There are apt to be some in the School who have not studied the lesson, and for them it is almost essential to have the Quarterly before them, that they may learn in the school what they neglected before they came. A Greek professor in one of our best universities was correcting the proof of a new Greek text-book for his class, and I noticed that he put the explanatory notes on the same page as the text, a thing that was tabooed in my college days. But he said that while the former way was theoretically better, yet, for practical purposes, with so little time for the study, he did not care where or when they learned the facts if only they learned them.

Thus I use both Bible and Quarterlies in my class, because in that way we get the greatest knowledge of the Bible into the scholars.

Next we asked, **How do you govern your class?** In every school and in many classes are active, restless, mischievous boys and girls, who make one think of a late picture in *Life*, where "plain Willie Jones" stands before you as an ordinary, wide-awake, active boy. Then we see Willie Jones as he appeared to his teacher, a little wild, black demon with horns and bats' wings, spear-pointed tail, and long, sharp claws. And lastly, we see him as he appeared to his mother, a heavenly-faced

cherub, in saintly attitude, with seraph wings, a halo, and a crown.

On the other hand, there are most excellent teachers, among the very best, who have little governing power. It is wise to keep these two classes apart.

Here are some of my rules for governing a class, for good order there must be : —

1. Make your scholars see that you are their friend and helper.

2. See the best in each scholar and cultivate it.

3. In the words of Professor Seeley, in his *Foundation of Education*: “Good order does not require the teacher to see every piece of innocent mischief. I have known teachers to make themselves and their pupils miserable because they saw every mischievous act, and felt constrained to call the culprit to account. I have found that the fault was chiefly with the teacher, who was nervous, fussy, and falsely conscientious. Good order does not mean absolute stillness” in the class, as it does in the devotional exercises. A certain amount of noise means work. (Study Professor Seeley’s whole chapter on this point.)

4. Keep things moving. The best teacher I ever had imposed no rules, but simply insisted on each scholar attending to his study.

5. Give the scholars something to do, and especially set the restless ones to doing it. Let them point out places on the map or write an answer or see a picture. Cultivate the self-activity of the child. (Study Dr. Forbush’s *Boy Problem*.)

6. Throw questions rapidly at an inattentive scholar, and keep at it till he becomes attentive.

7. Find the "point of contact" between the lesson and the things that the boy is interested in, needs, and knows he needs.

8. Use variety in teaching. The *Self-made Merchant*, in his *Letters to His Son*, says, "I don't care how good old methods are, new ones are better, even if they are only just as good."

9. I have two beloved friends, one the head of a large preparatory school for boys, the other a professor and dean of a great university, who, of all men within my knowledge, come the nearest to the ideal governing of boys and young men. Both practically use the Rarey system of controlling horses—perfect kindness united with absolute power of control. I believe what a wise man has said, that "of all the tools on God's work-bench, he uses kindness a thousand times to any other's once."

10. Here is a bit of experience from some one whose name I cannot recall:—

"At Boston a little girl was entertaining me very pleasantly in the parlor, while I was waiting for a friend to come downstairs. I said to her, 'You go to Sunday School?' 'Oh, yes.' 'You have a good teacher?' 'Yes, indeed, I have a splendid teacher, a magnificent teacher.' 'Then I suppose you prepare your lessons during the week?' 'Certainly,' she answered, 'teacher *makes* us do that.' I said, 'Give my compliments to your teacher. A teacher who *makes* her scholars prepare their Sunday School lessons during the week must be a very good teacher.' 'Well,' she said, 'I don't mean she *makes* us,' thinking her way of stating it had reflected on the spirit of the teacher. 'I don't mean she *makes* us get our lessons, but she teaches us so *that we love to get our lessons.*'"

11. Another teacher, a lady whose control over a large school is marvellous in its simplicity and perfection, uses chiefly self-government by the scholars themselves. This is especially effective where there is a class organization.

Rev. C. D. Meigs, editor of the *World-Evangel*, once wrote for Sunday School teachers the following lines, which are as sharp as the diamond he describes:—

“A diamond ‘in the rough’  
Is a diamond—sure enough,  
For, before it ever sparkles,  
*It is made of diamond stuff.*”

“Of course some one must *find* it,  
Or it never will be found,  
And then some one must *grind* it,  
Or it never will be ground.

“But when it’s found, and when it’s ground,  
And when it’s burnished bright,  
That diamond’s everlastingly  
*Just flashing out its light.*”

\* \* \* \* \*

“O! teacher in the Sunday School,  
Don’t think you’ve ‘done enough.’  
That worst boy in your class *may* be  
A diamond in the rough.

“Perhaps *you* think *he’s* ‘grinding’ *you!*  
And possibly you’re right,  
But *it may be you need* grinding,  
To burnish *you* up bright.”

Again we ask our teacher, **What do you do for your class outside of the Sunday School?**

A single hour once a week with his class is far too brief for the work a teacher is privileged to do. It is the

centre of a larger field, the source of many streams of helpful influences, the door to many opportunities. The class is the teacher's parish. He often can help his scholars more effectually in some aspects of their religious life than either parents or pastor. A pastor is a shepherd. The good shepherd knows his sheep by name ; he knows their peculiarities, their relationships, their tendencies. He knows them as individuals.

"Attempting to teach even little children, without knowing their temptations and surroundings," said the late Israel P. Black, "is somewhat like a game of blindman's-buff,—the teacher having the bandage over the eyes ; but, unlike it, it is not a game of innocent sport, but a sad and hopeless struggle to find souls."

The good teacher visits his class at their homes. He praises his scholars as much as he can. He may consult parents about their children's special needs and dangers, but very rarely, if ever, does he report misdemeanors. Professor James tells us, "Everything that a man can avoid under the notion that it is bad, he may also avoid under the notion that something else is good." Cultivate the good side. He has some form of class organization, through which he can become acquainted with his scholars, set them to work practising their lessons, and creating a class atmosphere which can make right things popular, and frown down all that is mean and unworthy.

We will ask our teacher only one more question, and then let him go home and rest. **What is your method of making the application of the lesson teachings ?**

This is the business end of the whole Sunday School machinery,—its point of contact with the spiritual nature, the character, and conduct. If it fails here, it fails



in its chief end and aim. Professor Alexander R. Merriam, of Hartford Theological Seminary, has written a little tract, costing only three cents, which would be a great blessing to the whole Sunday School world if every Church in the land should put a copy into the hands of each of its teachers. He says :—

“Despite much criticism upon the Sunday School, it yet stands, to-day, as the most direct agency we have for personal religious impression. In much discussion to-day, its evangelistic worth is entirely slighted, and attention wholly directed to the pedagogical features of the Sunday School, as if this were all it stood for. It does stand for instruction. But I wish to vindicate one of the functions of the Sunday School which it has always exemplified, and which it must keep vital if it have any distinctive place at all in our educational system. The mere educational feature is distracting our teachers from one feature which has been for years the Sunday School’s distinctive field, which still is, and which, even after changes come, still must be our great object: to bring our scholars to personal religious decision, and distinctive training in the Christian life. . . . Let the Sunday School never abdicate its throne.”

#### **How shall we attain this end ?**

1. Not largely by preaching in the sense of exhortation. “An ounce of preacher and a pound of teacher make a good mixture,” said a speaker at the last World’s Sunday School Convention.

2. The lesson should be so presented that “out of the facts the truths must grow inevitably as the blossom bursts out of a tree because of the life that is within.”

A great many teachers stop with the facts, and do not

go through with the application by showing the relation of the truth to the life.

It is your business to get that spiritual truth lodged in the heart and in the mind so that it never can be forgotten again. But that is not all. You must see to it that that *principle is applied in the life*, and in making the application, the first step — in a sermon, in personal work, or in Sunday School work — is to *make your truth concrete*. A principle is always an abstract thing, and that abstract doctrine must be clothed in the terms of everyday life, flesh and blood, must be told in the shape that it is to be lived. It must be made concrete by illustrations, pictures, symbols, the story form, testimony, etc.

Then the man is left to himself; he must reach out his own hand and lay hold of the truth and take it into his heart by a voluntary choice. Then when he has chosen the truth he must turn it into action, voluntary action, and if he does that continually, the truth becomes a virtue of his character because he habitually lives it. Habitually living the truth is virtuous character.<sup>1</sup>

3. Three-fourths of the Bible is history and biography. It teaches not only by precept, but by life, by the divinely interpreted picture of the way men and nations were struggling to work out the commandments and purposes of God. While discussing these things the other day, a prominent minister and university professor said to me that American history was better material for Sunday School study than Jewish history, for God is in modern

<sup>1</sup> Extracts from one of the most thoughtful addresses I ever read, on "The Secrets of Good Bible Teaching," by Professor Albert C. Wieand, delivered before the Bible Teachers' Training School of New York, and printed in *The Bible Record* of September, 1904.

history as really as in the history of the Jews, and it is closer to our modern life.

God is in our history; God is as really guiding the Church now as in the days of the apostles. This is what Christ promised his disciples. But there is this difference, — the Bible is not only divinely guided but divinely interpreted history. It is written by inspired prophets to show us the meaning of the history and of *all* history. And whenever we have a modern history written and interpreted by an inspired prophet, then modern history can be placed in the Sunday School alongside of Jewish history, and the later Church history beside the Acts. It is from close contact with divinely interpreted life that we are learning the applications to our own life and to modern history.

I cannot express this truth better than in the words of Miss Marianna C. Brown in her *Sunday School Movements in America*: “Each child \*must, to some extent, live over again the world’s struggles. If happily he is brought up as a spiritual plant and expands easily year by year, he needs the study of man’s spiritual development as shown in sacred history and literature, in order to enrich his life, to give him fuller appreciation of why others differ so much from him, and to make him understand the historic force of much that is about him, and is comparatively worthless except as commemorating struggles dear to the human race. . . . Bring him at least once a week into close personal contact with those who in person or sympathy have passed through rough waters, and stand firm on the Rock to ‘stretch out a loving hand to wrestlers with the troubled sea.’”

4. The life we live is “a motived life,” and the teacher

is accomplishing his purpose when he presents, makes clear, distinct, vivid, inspiring, the motives to a Christian life presented by the lesson of the day. He desires to lead his scholars to that deep, soul-wide choice of good, of obedience to God his Father, and of allegiance to his Leader Jesus Christ, which is called conversion. It is the underlying choice which decides his whole life for good or for evil.

But the teacher realizes that there are as many ways to this experience as there are gates to the City of God, which symbolizes the results of this experience.

“Decision day” is helpful in many cases, if it is remembered that in every life there are many decision days, decisions made in view of small duties, and daily temptations, in which the one that makes them does not realize or dream that he is really making a life choice, as the slightest turn of the rudder in view of some obstacle may unconsciously in time circle the ship into an opposite course.

5. The more personal application can best be made to each scholar alone, or when only two or three of the same mind are together.

The wisest day school teachers I know are careful to avoid the effect on boys of what may be called the audience. The head of a great Insane Asylum said to me that in managing his nervous patients he always avoided the effect of “the audience.” A boy will steel himself against yielding when other boys are looking on, who will be quite amenable to reason when alone. Few are willing to express their inmost feelings and desires within the hearing of others. Get the boy alone; let him feel that you are not a critic but a friend, that you are like your

Master, who came "not to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved." A very interesting and instructive example was given by Mr. John T. Prince, of the Massachusetts Board of Education, in an address before our Boston Superintendents' Unions.

"A Sunday School teacher had a class of boys from twelve to fourteen years of age, who had greatly troubled the teachers for some time. Disorder and confusion had prevailed with every teacher, no teacher being willing to continue for any length of time. The person alluded to was a trained and experienced teacher, and it was confidently hoped that he could control them. This he did, but he was compelled to be severe in his attitude toward them, stopping by stern command any disposition on the part of members of the class to disorder or diversion of interest. He left his class each Sunday in an unhappy frame of mind, and approached each new recitation with an indefinable dread. . . . On one Sunday only three members of the class were present, and he was surprised to find how much more attentive and interested they were than they had been before. Moreover, the boys seemed to be more free in their responses and expressions of opinion. The teacher was encouraged to believe that there was a change for the better, but when a larger number of members were present there was the same restraint and tendency to disorder. The experience with the smaller number was repeated on several occasions, and on one Sunday it was repeated in such a way as to leave no doubt in the teacher's mind as to the cause of the difficulty. It was the occasion of a very stormy day when only one boy was present — the one who had given the most trouble in the class. On this day the teacher was much surprised

to find how thoughtful and interested the boy was in the subject of the lesson. He gave freely of his understanding of the subject, and asked pertinent and thoughtful questions. In short his entire attitude toward the Bible lesson was changed."

6. Another most important method is to aid the scholar in applying the lesson immediately to his own conduct. Professor William James of Harvard, both in his latest book, *Talks to Teachers on Psychology*, and in his famous chapter on "The Psychology of Habit," urges this with all his power. These are good books for the teacher to study. His advice is, "Don't preach too much to your pupils or abound in good talk in the abstract. Lie in wait rather for the practical opportunities, and thus at one operation get your pupils to both think, and feel and do. The strokes of behavior are what give the new set to the character.

"Seize the very first possible opportunity to act on every resolution you make, and on every emotional prompting you may experience in the direction of the habits you aspire to gain. It is not in the moment of their forming, but in the moment of their producing motor effects, that resolves and aspirations communicate the new 'set' to the 'brain. Novel reading or theatre going, or even music, can produce monsters in the way of people who feel but do not act. The remedy would be never to suffer oneself to have an emotion, say at a concert, without expressing it in some active way. Let the expression be the least thing in the world, — speaking genially to one's aunt, or giving up one's seat in the horse-car, if nothing more heroic offers, — but let it not fail to take place!"<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See also Butler's *Analogy*, Part I, Chap. V, December 2, on active and passive habits.

“Remember that every resolve you make, every good impulse thought of, but not acted upon, every intention to do good or to help the poor or to make some sacrifice, every motive that ends simply and solely in the pious wish, does infinite harm. Stamp the new ideal into the mind strongly and so vigorously that it remains fastened there, and even crops up at times when no need occurs. This is the point in pledge-signing, in oath-taking, in going before God’s altar for impressiveness, etc. It makes a strong and powerful initiative; it stamps in a vivid, never-dying, ineffaceable impression.”

7. Cause your class to learn by heart some choice passage of Scripture which teaches in immortal words the main truth of the lesson.

I once heard a musician lecture on the violin. He described the rare woods from which it was made, the half century or more it took to dry out all its sap, the seventy-two pieces of which it was composed, all strangers at first and requiring a century to become acquainted, like Kipling’s “sweetening of the ship,” till at last the whole instrument vibrates in harmony; and so for an hour of intense interest. I shall never forget it. But the end and aim of all this is the music. As another has said, “This is all well, but give us the music.” There are a thousand things about the Bible that are of intense interest, that awaken enthusiastic study. But we cry out, “Give us the music.” Give us the harmonies of character, and of life, the heavenly experiences, for which all these things exist.

Many a teacher has lain down under Elijah’s juniper tree utterly discouraged at his seeming failure. Yet as the Lord saw seven thousand faithful ones where the prophet

saw none, so the Lord sees rich fruits of the teacher's labors where the discouraged heart sees "nothing but leaves."

Let a poem, with which Mead, in his *Modern Methods in Sunday School Work*, salutes his readers, be the angel of comfort to help the wearied teacher to go on in his journey to the mount where he shall see the vision of God, and hear "the still small voice" which says, "Well done, good and faithful servant, . . . enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

"I wonder if he remembers —  
 Our sainted teacher in Heaven —  
 The class in the old gray schoolhouse  
 Known as the 'Noisy Seven'?"

"I wonder if he remembers  
 How restless we used to be,  
 Or thinks we forget the lesson  
 Of Christ and Gethsemane?"

"I wish I could tell the story  
 As he used to tell it then;  
 I'm sure that, with Heaven's blessing,  
 It would reach the hearts of men.

"I often wish I could tell him,  
 Though we caused him so much pain  
 By our thoughtless, boyish frolic,  
 His lessons were not in vain.

"I'd like to tell him how Willie,  
 The merriest of us all,  
 From the field of Balaclava,  
 Went home at the Master's call.

"I'd like to tell him how Ronald,  
 So brimming with mirth and fun,  
 Now tells the heathen of India  
 The tale of the Crucified One.



“I'd like to tell him how Robert,  
And Jamie, and George, and ‘Ray,’  
Are honored in the Church of God —  
The foremost men of their day.

“I'd like, yes, I'd like to tell him  
What his lesson did for me;  
And how I am trying to follow  
The Christ of Gethsemane.

“Perhaps he knows it already,  
For Willie has told, maybe,  
That we are all coming, coming,  
Through Christ of Gethsemane.

“How many besides I know not  
Will gather at last in Heaven,  
The fruit of that faithful sowing,  
But the sheaves are already seven.”

— ANONYMOUS.

It is recorded of one of the most distinguished painters of former days that when he was a mere boy, after viewing a painting by Raphael for some time with silent transport, he suddenly broke out, with joy beaming in his countenance, as if he had found a treasure, “I, too, am a painter.”

Dr. Payson of Portland once said that if ministers realized the blessing and the opportunity God had conferred upon them, they would leap and shout for joy, crying, “I am a minister of Christ; I am a minister of Christ.”

If Sunday School teachers realized their privilege, the blessedness of teaching, of guiding children into the ways of life, they would exult, and glory, and give thanks, for “*I, too, am a teacher of children; I have a class in the Sunday School.*”

## IV

### HOW CAN BUSINESS MEN AND BUSY WOMEN BEST PREPARE THEIR SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON?

A NEIGHBORING pastor once asked me to come up to his church and talk to his Sunday School teachers, and the subject he wished me to speak upon was, "How can Business Men and Busy Women best Prepare their Sunday School Lessons?"

I was then, as I always have been, a very busy man, and was just entering upon my present work, while at the same time pastor of a large and growing Church and Sunday School. I had, therefore, been compelled to study how to do the most work with the least friction, and to find out every possible labor-saving device that would give the best results.

Some of these I will mention in this discussion, and will consider others when we come to **Bible study for the Sunday School**.

Most ministers are the busiest of men, and nearly all the Sunday School teachers are taken, or ought to be taken, from the busiest men and women of their Churches. I am not speaking to you as ministers, but as those who are to help these busy men and women to do the best possible work for their scholars. If you can gain from the simple things I may say any hint to busy men and women untrained in this direction, so much the better, but in the

main you will doubtless work them out for yourselves, just as I have done. My chief qualification for helping teachers lies in the difficulties that I, as one of no special talents, have experienced and have been compelled to overcome as I could. You will learn in time, as I have learned, the truth of that Greek proverb, old as Herodotus and Æschylus, *Ta pathemata mathemata*,—The things we have experienced, our burdens, our difficulties, our struggles, our sufferings, are the things that teach us. I have always written slowly; my thoughts do not easily crystallize into the best form; but always I have tried to do “my level best.” This standing on the level of the great majority is not without its advantages and consolations. I hear teachers, when some teaching genius speaks to them, say, Your words and plans are all right for a genius, but what help is there for us who are not geniuses, but just common people of ordinary talent? Please tell us what *we* can do.

I think that for the teacher, and for the preacher so far as he is a teacher, the parable of the Pounds is more helpful than the parable of the Talents; that it is better for him to be one of the multitude to whom one pound is committed, provided he multiplies that one into ten, than to be one of the few who receive five talents, and only doubles them into ten.

When I was pastor of a village church I used to try to keep the small grounds around my house as neat and beautiful as I could, and I experimented with various plants and methods to see how much could be done with the least labor and expense, hoping that others would take the hint and the appearance of the village be improved. Among other things I arranged a flower-bed in

front of the house and placed a fountain in the centre. One bright Saturday afternoon a minister, a stranger, came up the street to see me, and, seeing a fountain in front of the house to which he was directed, said to himself, "This cannot be the place; a minister cannot afford to have a fountain," and he passed on to the next house. An hour later another minister did the same thing. And yet that fountain had an old paint keg for a base; on the top was nailed a large, discarded dishpan; through them was placed a piece of rain-conductor left over when building the house; the whole was painted with some left-over paint, and the hose with an ordinary sprinkler was passed up through it. An old paint keg, a leaky dishpan, and a waste piece of conductor made a fountain that a minister could not afford to have!

That is a good illustration of what I propose to bring you to-day, so that no teacher need go away discouraged, as I have known teachers to be after hearing the ideal teacher portrayed at conventions. They determined to give up their classes because the star to which they were told to hitch their Sunday School wagons was too far beyond their reach.

I. It goes without saying that **every teacher means to be prepared**. I am now speaking of special preparation for a particular lesson, not of that kind of preparation to which the minister referred "when he truly said he had been thirty years preparing his sermon, although, perhaps, the immediate preparation of the discourse had taken but a few hours. Thirty years' life, with its experiences, had gone into the sermon. According to Mr. Spurgeon, "a minister once said, 'Sir, I go into the pulpit and preach and think nothing of it,' and the one

to whom he made that remark said, 'And that is just what your people think of it.' If you can go to your class and teach as easily as possible without any preparation, depend upon it as you think nothing of it your children will think nothing of it." Such men "toil not, but they spin." There is little use in talking to that teacher—rare as the dodo, I trust—who thinks that the Lord can or will do as good work through his ignorance as through his knowledge; or who does not see the common sense of the farmer who advised his son to load his gun before he fired.

II. Neither is it necessary to dwell upon the necessity of **opening our hearts to the Holy Spirit**, who alone can make our teaching effective.

III. **The keynote of the time-saving process** is to fill the mind with the subject and main points of the lesson *early in the week*, preferably Sunday afternoon. Read over the lesson, read it in different translations, in the original if you can, or in the different languages you may know, each one flashing out light on some point or facet not seen so clearly in the others. Some truths, too, are brought out more distinctly by reading the passage aloud.

*Note* that it is important to read the whole lesson and not merely the verses selected for printing in the Quarterlies, "the gist of the lesson." The International Lesson Committee has always implied, and for a number of years has expressly stated with each lesson, that the lesson is more than the verses selected for printing and detailed study, but is a whole section of the history. And yet, there are not only teachers, but even lesson writers and wise critics who have "an acute attack of inadequate information" on this point. But no good teacher does

confine himself to the verses printed in the Quarterlies, nor do the best "helps." Read the whole lesson section carefully, if the lesson be historical; and remember, if the lesson is doctrinal, that every great doctrine is revealed in several forms, in didactic statement, in history, in parable, in life, and in song,—and we need them all in order to see the doctrine as it really is.

IV. The next time-saving, and at the same time soul-blessing, means is to **use the next Sunday's lesson for some part of your daily devotional reading every day in the week.** Use it for family prayers with your children. I have great faith in the power of looking—looking intently, steadily, continuously—at a single passage of Scripture till it is illuminated, transfigured. That is what Agassiz told his students to do in studying even a fish. That is what Professor Drummond said a naturalist must do in studying nature. "To watch uninterruptedly the same few yards of universe unfold its complex history; to behold the hourly resurrection of new living things, and miss no change or circumstance, even of its minute parts, to look at all, especially the things you have seen before a hundred times, to do all with patience and reverence—this is the only way to study nature."<sup>1</sup>

I have heard two opposite opinions concerning such a use of one's devotional hours, from men known throughout the whole country. One declared that we should never take for our devotional reading the lesson we are to teach. The other said that it was the very soul and glory of devotion to do that very thing. My whole experience favors the latter view. Whenever a passage of Scripture touches my soul and sets it on fire, then I am prepared to

<sup>1</sup> *Tropical Africa*, p. 110.

kindle with it the souls of my pupils or my people. Whenever I have studied a scripture till I see in it a new meaning, till it inspires and uplifts me, makes me love God better, and my fellow-men, reveals to me a new vision of truth, then only am I best fitted to preach or to teach. Every powerful sermon is preached first to the minister himself, and after that to his congregation, and it tells on other people because he can say, "We speak that we do know, and bear witness of that we have seen."

In one of his poems Browning relates a parable of the Two Camels, which needs no further interpretation than the telling. The two camels, beasts of price, both dedicated themselves to their master's service; both were to carry for him precious burdens across the desert. One did all he could to save his master expense; he ate the poorest food, and as little of it as possible, and then, by his lack of strength, he fell dead in the desert, thieves stole his pack, and his master had neither camel nor merchandise. The other camel ate the best food and ate all he needed, — "no sprig of chevril must I leave unchewed," — and was able to pass through the desert safely with his burden, and his master had both camel and burden. Feed yourself, if you would be strong to feed others.

"Just as I cannot, till myself convinced,  
Impart conviction, so, to deal forth joy  
Adroitly, needs must I know joy myself."

V. Next in order, still at the very beginning of the week, the **right use of the best helps** you can obtain, usually of more than one kind. It is curious to note how some people object to Bible helps even for children, calling them crutches for the lame, in the very addresses

and books which they use to help people toward their views, and for which they have used helps all their lives.

Everybody has to use helps; the disputed question is at what period of our study we are to use them.

My father taught me when a schoolboy, that in writing a composition I should think out the subject for myself before reading what others had said concerning it. Professor Amos R. Wells, one of the wisest men I know, says in his richly suggestive book on *Sunday School Success*, which all ought to study, and says with the emphasis of italics, "Let me emphasize this statement: Not a single lesson help should be touched until everything possible to be learned about the lesson from the Bible directly has been learned."

Another writer expresses himself thus: "One reason why I have been myself averse to using the lesson journals is this: The matter is too convenient; it tempts me to ignore the Bible, from which all inspiration for the work is derived; it comes easily and I forget it as readily, and so the preparation is not clear and definite. The place for the Sunday School paper comes after you have mastered the knowledge in other ways."

Now the teaching of my whole experience and observation is this: Do not wait till you have thought out your subject, but begin early in your thinking to use what others have learned, and let the two processes go on together. I am aware that this is somewhat heterodox, but it is both wisdom and truth for the persons whom I am advising.

I am not writing for theological professors, nor for students who have unlimited time at their command, nor for men of genius who can use the above advice, but for



busy men and women, and for some busy ministers who may "taste the spices of Arabia, yet never feel the scorching sun which brings them forth." For them I can see only one wise way in which to get the most out of their time.

Of course the Bible is to be first read, and its statements made familiar. I have no sympathy with the young man who some years ago came into a Sunday School bookstore in Boston and said he wanted to purchase a book called *The Bible Wholly Commentary*. He meant *The Commentary Wholly Biblical*.

But in the early part of the week the busy man should use some good explanatory and suggestive helps. It is like a personally conducted tour of Europe. A wise and trained conductor, with a small party, will give the great majority of people, on their first tour, twice as much of the best things, in the same time, as they could gain by going alone. After that experience each one can go alone and make a detailed study with advantage. A man of wealth came to a period of leisure and tried to understand art. He went to art galleries, but returned unable to distinguish a good picture from a bad one. He said, "The idea that there must be a real, true value in art, and that I could not find it, took so strong a hold of me that I became restless, nervous, irritable." He went to an artist, who taught him, not how to paint, but how to *see*. He had the same experience with music, till a musician taught him, not how to sing, but how to *hear*. They gave him what he could not obtain alone, — the way to a never-dreamed-of delight.

1. It is necessary to get the true interpretation of the passage in order to think correctly at all. Then there are whole ranges of thought that the busy man is likely

to omit because he does not even know that they exist. He may easily miss the new light thrown upon the text by the study of the Bible as literature; by the historic study which places each prophecy or event in its native historical setting; by the meaning of particular words, such as "conversation," "instant," "offend," which is different from their meaning as used to-day.

What is the use of going on thinking in the wrong direction and gathering materials which, as soon as one uses his "helps," must be discarded?

In our family, where there are no young children, we have found it both interesting and helpful to use the introductions in Moulton's *Modern Reader's Bible*, sometimes spending a whole week on the introduction to a single book before we read the book itself. Of course, before that we have a general knowledge of the book; but the reading the book in the light of his words has added greatly to its *beauty and power*.

2. In the next place, the more material for thought one has the more valuable his thinking. Fill up the wells, and then you will no longer have the

"Toil of dropping buckets into empty wells  
And growing old in drawing nothing out."

3. Most of us can think better under the inspiration of others' suggestions. In the words of another: "Reading is really an invaluable help to the best thinking. It furnishes both the materials and an incentive to thinking. It stimulates the mind to put forth its best energies, while it broadens the field for thought; and, in general, it may be said truthfully that he who does not read does not think much."

I well remember how, after I had wandered over the British Museum, especially those parts which throw light upon the Bible, I found a person who in a few moments pointed out things of great value, which I could not have learned by myself had I stayed there a year. After that I studied them for myself. Every reader and thinker has read books which have been to him almost like a new revelation. Every little while in my life I have come across such books, which have marked almost epochs in the development of thought and work. They have been like the secret doors in an old castle, unnoticed till pointed out by some one acquainted with them, and then opening into treasures of gold and art.

4. Some wise man, in giving advice to writers, says: "Be original. . . . In order to *become* original, one must, as a rule, go through a period of being deliberately imitative. One must soak one's self in the great stylists, Keats, Tennyson, Rossetti, etc., and then consciously adapt, borrow, and copy, until one finally learns to stand alone. The period of needing masters will pass in time, but one cannot be too teachable at first."

This is wise advice for Sunday School teachers. Be original. Work out your own plan, according to your own natural bent and the kind of scholars you are teaching. But first *saturate* yourself with the text and the theme, and all the knowledge you can gain concerning them from every source. "Imitation," says Professor Horne, "is a mere schoolmaster to bring us to originality."

It is a waste of time to learn everything for one's self from the very beginning. The architect studies all the architecture of the world. The artist goes to all the great galleries and sees the best paintings genius has been able

to paint. Then, and only then, can each do his best original work.

You must do your own work, you must be an original thinker, and work out the problems for yourselves; you cannot be "carried to the skies on flowery beds of ease" which others have made. But you can be most original when you know what others have done before you, and you stand on the mountain tops the heir of all the ages, and climb higher and enjoy a wider vision.

But if you cannot be original, you can choose from the best set before you by others, and standing on the mountains they have built is far better than to remain in the shadows of your own valley.

VI. While using the Helps, still early in the week, you can **form a clear idea of the framework or setting of the lesson.** The more vivid it is to you, the better for those you are intending to teach.

There are various simple methods of accomplishing this end. Mark in the Bible history the place where the prophets belong, writing their names on the margin. Make the geography clear by locating the places in your own neighborhood which have the same relations. Using your church as the centre, as symbolizing the Temple, you can in your own town represent every location in Jerusalem which Jesus has hallowed, by places or buildings at the same distances and in the same directions, making real how far Jesus went to Olivet, or the upper room, or the pool of Siloam, or to Calvary. You can realize the travels of Jesus, and of Paul, of the Exiles and their return, by distances and towns in your own state.

In *Tom Brown at Oxford* the leading scholar is represented as learning his Greek history by means of a map on

the wall, and pins with large heads made of sealing-wax of different colors. One army was represented by pins with red heads, the other by pins with black heads. Thus in the famous retreat of the ten thousand, wherever the armies encamped there the pins were placed, and were moved with every movement of the troops, so many parasangs to this city, and so many to that, till the whole line of march was traced visibly on the wall. Not only was the history remembered better, but the distance, the directions, the reasons for changes, the difficulties overcome, the skill and courage required, were seen as in no other way.

During the Civil War, several ministers in my neighborhood carried out the same plan. Whenever any report came of a march or a battle, the pins were changed to correspond. We might easily have added pins with cardboard fliers to indicate battle-fields.

I once tried a similar experiment with the Intermediate Department of our Sunday School, following on the map the footsteps of Jesus. Some one of the scholars moved a large-headed pin to mark the places and directions where he went when teaching in Galilee or walking to Judea.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Marion Lawrance, who has built up an almost ideal school in Toledo, Ohio, describes a very interesting plan used there: "We had a map of the Holy Land and Asia Minor. We were illustrating the missionary work of Paul. The idea that the church was a bright light, and every Christian a light, was emphasized. The map was put upon a large soft pine board. Wherever there were churches, — for instance, at Jerusalem, Antioch, Ephesus, etc., — a number of holes were punched into the board with an awl. In these holes were set parlor matches with the heads up. A row of holes marked out the pathway Paul travelled, first to Antioch, then across to Asia Minor, and back and forth. Have the board set at a slight angle, so that it can be seen by the people in the room. The matches should be close enough together so that one would set fire to

This same plan, with some additions, may be followed with reference to any history in the Bible, either in the home or in the class, or before the whole school. Pins with sealing-wax heads of different sizes and colors may represent the apostles and missionaries whose work is recorded. A box of cardboard letters, such as are used in the familiar letter games, can be obtained for a trifle, and the initial letters of the chief places can be fastened as fliers on pins, and mark the spots where the leading events take place as they are reached in the history.

I well remember the first Chautauqua Reading Circle formed in my parish. We were reading Merivale's *History of Rome*. We were meeting one evening at the house of a large farmer. We were trying to realize the scenes and events at Rome, which, at that time, none of us had seen. But we took a long woollen tippet, and curved it on the parlor floor as the Tiber curves through Rome. Milk pans placed bottom upward represented the Seven Hills of Rome — Capitoline, Aventine, Pincian, and all the rest. We marked the places where the historic events occurred. A piece of wood across the woollen Tiber showed where Horatius kept the bridge. We saw the Tarpeian Rock, the Forum, the Appian Way. So vivid

another. At the right time in the exercises speak of what a great light in the world the Jerusalem Church was. If you have a dozen or more matches representing that church, the flame will rise a foot high. Presently the line of matches will catch fire, and this will represent Paul starting out to Antioch. When he arrives there, there is another bright light representing the church at Antioch. Then he starts across to Cyprus, etc., and to Asia Minor. Everybody in the room will be intensely interested to notice his travels as he goes. I would not recommend this indiscriminately, but it did well with us."

was the picture that when, later, I went to Rome, that crude Rome on the parlor floor helped me to more easily understand the great city.

Take another instance. George Adam Smith, in his *Geography of the Holy Land*, pictures the scenery around the Well Harod, where Gideon and his three bands overcame the Midianites, so that it is easy to see the reasons for the choice of the three hundred. The well and the little stream that divided the armies are bordered with a thicket of tall reeds, so that any number of the enemy might be lurking there in ambush. The great majority of the citizen soldiers never thought of the danger, and kneeled down and drank from the stream where they would be helpless in a sudden attack. But there were three hundred, sharp, shrewd, wide awake, who, with their eyes on the forest of reeds, holding their weapons, merely stooping, threw the water with their hands into their mouths, and were never off their guard.

These were the men Gideon wanted for his dangerous expedition. The dullest boy in the class will wake up and understand, when the teacher, who sees the picture himself, describes and gestures that scene.<sup>1</sup> Note how beautifully Whittier, in his *Chapel of the Hermits*, uses a similar method:—

<sup>1</sup> Bishop Vincent, in his *Modern Sunday School*, gives another illustration of this method: "A minister once located the principal characters of universal history on a single street, — a long street, many miles long, — chronologically so divided that his pupils could locate 'Alexander's house' and the 'house of Moses' and the 'house of Napoleon,' so that the street became a constant reminder of not only illustrious names in history, but a chronological guide always present. 'I passed,' said a little fellow, 'Alexander's house this morning on the way from the post-office, and it was not very far from the house of Aristotle.'"

- “ This maple ridge shall Horeb be,  
Yon green-banked lake our Galilee.
- “ The heavens are glassed in Merrimac,  
What more could Jordan render back !
- “ We lack but open eye and ear  
To find the Orient’s marvels here ;  
The still, small voice in autumn’s hush,  
Yon maple wood the burning bush.
- “ Our common daily life divine,  
And every land a Palestine.”

So much time has been consumed in describing these things that it may seem as if too large a proportion of the study hour had been devoted to them, to the exclusion of the spiritual and practical lessons. But, in fact, the very briefest time is taken up in any one lesson. They are the black wires which conduct the electricity to the lamps, of no use unless the current flows through them and the lamps are lighted. It is the teacher’s business to light them. But they cannot be lighted without the wires. It is only dead pipes and wires painfully built up into the glass cross on the tall spire at Cohoes ; but when lighted, that cross shines in symbolic glory over the whole landscape.

VII. Early in the week must be **formed a tentative plan of the lesson**, in which the leading topics or thoughts shall stand out clear, distinct, vivid, living, all bearing on the one principal theme, which should be like the golden milestone of ancient Rome, the central focus of roads from every province of the Empire.

Until this takes place the lesson is like the man in bottles in South Kensington Museum, or rather the representation of a man resolved into the chemical elements



of which his body is composed, each element there, in its due proportion, in a separate bottle, but not a man. The teacher is to be a new Frankenstein to recreate the elements into a living, organized being.

VIII. We are now prepared for that **unconscious cerebration**, and what may be called crystallization, which are the chief time-saving processes in preparing the lesson. As a string in a saturated solution at rest will gather about itself crystals of that which is dissolved, so will a living thought in a full mind gather to itself other thoughts from every source and form definite crystals of truth. If you wish good flowers from a hyacinth bulb, you must put it away in the dark for weeks in order that it may become thoroughly rooted before the flower stalk rises into bloom. You will notice on the trees in autumn the buds which after sleeping all winter burst into leaves and blossoms in the spring. Why this long winter sleep is necessary I do not know. But it has its parallel in the operations of the mind.

“When a man takes up a subject and holds it in his mind, now and then recurring to it and calling it up and looking at it, and then putting it back to sleep over it, he comes at length to its thorough mastery. It is a good thing to sleep over a subject.”

I am always glad to have the testimony of successful men to the things my own experience has taught me. Dr. William M. Taylor, in showing ministers how to prepare their sermons, gives his experience thus: “He will have work enough for two mornings at least in reading over in the original the passage that is to come in course on the next Sunday, and in carefully weighing all that has been written upon it by the commentators whose works are on

his shelves. Let him mark the thoughts that are of special importance in each, and read on until he is, as it were, saturated with his theme. Then in a wonderful way — which I can never explain to myself — he will find that, by the time he has read all his books of reference, his own thoughts have begun to crystallize, and perhaps all at once, almost with the rapidity of an electric discharge, the whole plan will open up to him, and he will see his way from the beginning to the end of his discourse. Let him take a note of that plan, and then leave it to simmer for a season.”

Oliver Wendell Holmes, in his *Autocrat of the Breakfast Table*, gives his experience thus: “Physiologists and metaphysicians have had their attention turned of late to the automatic and involuntary actions of the mind. Put an idea into your intelligence and leave it there an hour, a day, a year, without ever having occasion to refer to it. When, at last, you return to it you do not find it as it was when acquired. It has domiciliated itself, so to speak, — become at home, — entered into relations with your other thoughts, and integrated itself with the whole fabric of the mind.”

Amos R. Wells, in *Sunday School Success*, bears a like testimony: “These verses should be running through our heads as we run on all our six-day tasks, and should sing themselves to all our labor tunes. But chiefly, it is only in this way that we can accumulate hints, and grow into the truths of the lesson by experience. With the lesson theme for a nucleus, it is astounding to see what a wealth of illustration, of wise and helpful comment, each day’s living thrusts upon us. Every event is a picture of some truth which needs only a sensitive plate to be photo-

graphed forever. That sensitive plate is a mind which is studying that particular truth."

I always have some of these living magnet-truths in my mind, and they are continually gathering around themselves something from every source. They make one's mind not like the Nile which flows two thousand miles without a tributary, but like the Amazon which drains a continent for its waters. Every book I read, on whatever subject, every experience, all intercourse with others, travel, picture galleries, factories, fields and forests and cities, — everything contributes something to the subjects in mind. For this reason I hate to read a book that I do not own, for I want to mark its margins, and note special pages on the fly-leaf for easy reference and review.<sup>1</sup>

IX. Another method for making the most of a limited time and opportunity is to **make your class co-laborers**, working partners, with you. Enlist their services. Give them something to look up, or to think upon. Show them

<sup>1</sup> "Some time ago I heard the following definition of a true scholar. A scholar, it was said, is a man who knows something of everything and everything of something. By all means let our ministers know some little about everything. A quaint divine some years ago was bidding good-by to one of his students whose stock of information on some subjects was very meagre, and he said: 'Now, young man, take care you keep the door of your empty rooms carefully locked.' Oh, those empty rooms! When iron is magnetized it attracts other fragments of iron. So, *if there is any one subject on which the mind is always brooding, the mind becomes, as it were, magnetic on that subject.* All kinds of facts, truths from every field, jump to it and stick to it. *This is the secret of success in every department of learning, and emphatically is it true of the Christian minister. Every preacher to be successful must have his mind magnetized by Gospel truth, and then whatever he reads will be attracted to some Scripture text or other to illustrate or explain it. There can be no success in any other way.*"

— I. T. MARSHALL.

where they can find a good example or illustration. Let one look up the geography, another draw a map, another find the best verse, another can suggest what the class can do in practising the lesson.

For many years I was a member of a Shakespeare class in my parish (I am still an honorary member). We were busy men and women, ministers, lawyers, judges, doctors, teachers, business men, and busy women. We met to study, but had scant time for special preparation. Each one was appointed to do something to bring to the class, look up the history of the play, its sources, the historical facts upon which it was founded, the characteristics of the persons, etc., so that while each of us could do but little, there was some one with fresh information on every point, and I learned more literature in that club than in my whole college course.

X. Lastly, a **Teachers' Meeting** is a great saving of time. There is something in the contact of soul with soul that no reading of books can give. It is life that kindles life. There are people who never suggest anything, who are like a wet blanket, and make you feel dull, and wonder whether you are not losing your intellect. Another man will wake you up, kindle new thoughts, suggest bright sayings till you are surprised at your own brightness and fertility of thought. Those are the ones you wish to meet at the teachers' meeting. There is truth, too, in O. W. Holmes's statement that he often talked in order to crystallize his own thoughts. Separate embers will die out, but when piled together they will kindle into a blaze. An artist wishing to paint a portrait of Shakespeare had his death-mask photographed from twenty points of view. We need other minds to present a

subject from all points of view in order to see it as it really is.

The methods described above are among the greatest educating forces for busy men and women. No one can have these great subjects living in their minds, and gathering other thoughts to them, and be compelled to make them so vivid, so accurate, so practical that they can teach them, without himself becoming educated. The Sunday School is the teacher's postgraduate course.

In the new Congressional Library at Washington this motto is written over one of the alcoves, — "To the souls of fire, I, Pallas Athenæ, give more fire, and to those who are manful a might more than man's."

## V

### TEACHER TRAINING, "AN EDUCATION FOR THE EDUCATOR"

I. **The Most Urgent Problem before the Sunday School World of To-day is how to obtain Teachers trained for their Work;** which practically means, How to train for their work, those in our churches (1) who are teachers in the Sunday School, (2) those who ought to be teachers, and (3) those who are growing up to become teachers.

There is no discord among educators on this point. We can say of it as Emerson said, when some one spoke in his presence of the ideas of the Declaration of Independence as "Glittering generalities." "Glittering generalities!" said Emerson, "They are blazing ubiquities."

The need of better-trained teachers is "a blazing ubiquity." It is present in every school, in every college, in every Sunday School. It is omnipresent in books on education, secular or religious.

Professor Seeley in *The Foundations of Education*: "It is a well-established pedagogical maxim that the most important element of an educational system is the qualified teacher."

B. F. Jacobs: "Dr. Sarah Hackett Stevenson tells us that the childhood of this generation is crying out '*Educate my mother!*' If transposed to read, '*Educate my*

*teacher,* it will voice the heart and life cry of many children who do not yet know of their great need and how to ask for it."

Resolution adopted by the Fourth World's Sunday School Convention held at Jerusalem in the spring of 1904:—

"While reaffirming that the first essential work of the Sunday School teacher is to bring the pupil to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ and to strengthen his life in him, this convention declares its conviction that one of the greatest needs of the Sunday School is a higher efficiency on the part of our teachers, and it greatly desires to see improved plans of teacher-training more widely extended. We heartily commend the plan of the International Executive Committee in appointing a special educational committee to promote this work.

Dr. Arnold of Rugby: "It is clear that in whatsoever it is our duty to act, those matters also it is our duty to study."

President Eliot: "The actual problem to be solved is not what to teach, but how to teach."

Shakespeare:—

"Ignorance is the curse of God,  
Knowledge the wing wherewith we fly to heaven."

—2 *Henry IV.*

Professor Münsterberg, in his *American Traits*: "Just as it has been said that war needs three things, (1) *Money*, (2) *MONEY*, (3) and again *MONEY*, so it can be said with much greater truth that Education needs not forces, and buildings, not pedagogy and demonstrations, but only *Men*, *MEN*, and again *MEN*—without forbidding that some, not too many of them, shall be women."

Professors Burton and Mathews in *Principles and*

*Ideals* : “ If the Sunday School is a real educational institution, can it be carried on by untrained teachers ? ”

This is not a new movement. Training classes for Sunday School teachers were instituted in England as early as 1856, and in the same year Mr. Frater “ urged the establishment of Sunday School colleges in all large towns for training senior scholars to become teachers.” The movement in this country began at least as early as the International Lessons, and has been earnestly urged by the committee from the beginning.

But in the present age there is a greater emphasis upon it, a deeper feeling of its need, and a vastly greater opportunity.

**II. The Present Status.** — It is quite impossible to deal wisely with the present situation without a fairly accurate knowledge of what that situation is.

One of the most difficult things is to discover just what is the real character of the teaching in the Sunday School. When I hear from ministers in conventions and read the characterizations of the Sunday School teachers made by editors and learned college professors, which all my observation declares to be caricatures, or at best like the huge genie towering from the tiny box of the fisherman, I cannot help inquiring how many of their facts are derived from imagination or childhood’s memories, and how much from actual knowledge of the present-day Sunday Schools. In how many classes have they, within the last few years, sat and heard the teaching?

Without doubt the severe indictments of Sunday School teaching are made by contrasting the good average teaching with the highest ideals ; just as the best saints confess their sins, far more earnestly than bad men do theirs, be-



cause the saints have vastly higher ideals. But as Theodore Parker once said of these same saints that if their confessions were true, they ought to go to state prison, so these contrasts between the actual teaching and the loftiest ideals, which the best teachers feel the most, give a wrong impression to the common mind.

It is well known that Dr. A. J. Gordon, late pastor of the Clarendon Street Baptist Church of Boston, early in his ministry had a dream or vision as real as Peter's vision on the housetop in Joppa.<sup>1</sup> He saw Christ in his congregation, and looked as through Christ's eyes upon everything pertaining to his preaching, the services, and the Church. That vision changed his preaching and the whole atmosphere and work of his Church.

Now if Christ came to our Sunday Schools and sat beside the teacher, what would he see? He would see the evil, of course, as Stead saw the evil in Chicago, in his book, *If Christ came to Chicago*. But he would look at it, not as a policeman looking for crime, but as a good physician looks at disease, as something to be lovingly cured. Under such a look as Christ gave to Peter, the unfaithful teacher would go out and weep bitterly.

But I am sure that Christ would look at the Sunday School far more as Edward Everett Hale represents him in *How Christ came to Boston*, looking chiefly for the good.

He would see I know not how many teachers who do not know what to teach nor how to teach. How they came to be teachers it is hard to tell. They may have been the only ones available. They may have wanted to do some good for which they were not fitted by nature or by grace. They may have had a dim idea of duty, with-

<sup>1</sup> See *How Christ came to Church*, Baptist Publication Society.

out any real will to do their best. I trust there are not many. We can only say of them the couplet some one has written in answer to Whittier's lines —

“Of all sad words of tongue and pen,  
The sadd'st are these, ‘it might have been,’”

suggesting that

“A sadder thing we sometimes see,  
It is, but it ought not to be!”

And yet in my own heart I cannot but feel that even for these Whittier's following lines are not only better poetry, but deeper truth: —

“Ah, well! for us some sweet hope lies  
Deeply buried from human eyes,  
And in the hereafter angels may  
Roll the stone from its grave away.”

Again he would see a large number of the best and most intelligent people in the community, educated men, teachers in the day schools, saints who have lived on the Bible, skilled business men, mothers who have trained their own children well, and thus learned to train the children of others, women who give time and strength and brains to teaching, the leaders of thought and influence. There is a large amount of truth in the words of B. F. Jacobs, than whom few knew more about Sunday School teaching, that “God had skimmed the cream of the Church and put it into the Sunday School.” I would go farther, and say that by means of the Sunday School God was transforming the skim-milk of the Church into cream.

Then Christ would see the great body of Sunday School teachers, men and women of medium intelligence and abil-

ity, of moderate education and opportunity, of fair faithfulness, and a general desire to do their best for their scholars. The great majority of these have had comparatively little training in **how to teach**, and incomplete training in **what to teach**. But most of them are not entirely untrained for their work. Technical training is only a part of teacher training, as we shall see. And it is impossible for the Sunday School work to be done without these teachers, and most of them do good work, often very good work, though not the best possible.

The most hopeful element in the situation is the large and rapidly growing interest in the training of teachers, and the increasing opportunities for that training. The better the teachers, the more they feel the need of training. The same spirit is abroad to-day which a late address describes as inspiring our forefathers. "Six years after the founding of Boston, our forefathers, only a few thousand in number, scattered thinly from Ipswich to Cohasset and Watertown to Boston, while still in danger of starvation and, as one chronicler puts it, 'of rattlesnakes by day and savages by night,' founded Harvard College 'Christo et Ecclesiae.' They determined that the culture of the mind should begin with the culture of the soul."

And still more hopeful is the fact that the training of teachers means the training of the whole Church. Parents need the training as really as teachers, and the means by which teachers are trained are largely open to the whole community.

**III. The Kind of Training depends on the Purpose and Aim of the Teaching in the Sunday School.** — This is so obvious a truth that it needs but to be stated to be

accepted as true. And yet not a little of the criticisms of the teaching force, and not a few of the discussions of teacher training ignore this obvious truth, or lay wrong emphasis upon the different elements of the training.

Bishop Vincent is right in saying, "As nearly everything in the School depends upon the teacher, so nearly everything in the teacher depends upon his aims."

**IV. The Next Step** therefore is for the Teacher to have **Clearly and Definitely in Mind** what he means to accomplish by his Teaching. What is the supreme end of Sunday School teaching, and what subordinate aims minister to it, or have a value in themselves? I will name them in the order of their supremacy, of their dependence one on the other.

(1) *The supreme and ultimate aim of Sunday School teaching is perfect Christian character and the life which is its natural expression.* It is the attaining "unto a full-grown man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ."<sup>1</sup> The forming of the best character is now regarded by educators as the highest aim of all educations. Let me put it before you from four points of view stated by four men of both experience and power:—

"In the contrast so often made to-day between the day school and the Sunday School, remember this," says Professor Merriam, "that what is primary in the day school is secondary in the Sunday School, and what is fundamental in the one place is only incidental in the other; that is, your *main purpose* is moral and spiritual. The main purpose of the day school is intellectual. What the day school does indirectly in ethical influence is your direct object—to form the spiritual character of that group of young people."

<sup>1</sup> Eph. 4:13.

“It is an admirable thing,” said President Roosevelt, the other day, in addressing a school, “a most necessary thing, to have a sound body. It is an even better thing to have a sound mind. But infinitely better than either is it to have that, for the lack of which neither sound mind nor a sound body can atone — character. Character is in the long run the decisive factor in the life of individuals and of nations alike. Sometimes, in rightly putting the stress that we do upon intelligence, we forget the fact that there is something that counts more. It is a good thing to be clever, to be able and smart; but it is a better thing to have the qualities that find their expression in the Decalogue and the Golden Rule.”

Professor Sanders’s: “The aim of all Sabbath School work is, or ought to be, the building up of character. This gives a wider and truer range to it than that which is given by the usual definition. It includes the forming of the being, the reaching of the mind in all its departments, and treats it as a single entity.”

In the words of the lamented Professor Henry Drummond: “The image of Christ that is forming within us — that is life’s one charge. Let every project stand aside for that. ‘Till Christ be formed,’ no man’s work is finished, no religion crowned, no life has fulfilled its end. Is the infinite task begun? When, how, are we to be different? Time cannot change men. Death cannot change men. Christ can. Wherefore ‘put on Christ.’”

(2) *The supreme choice of righteousness, of God as our Father, and of Christ as Saviour and as the embodiment of all that is good, that is, a supreme love of God, of Christ, and of duty, is an essential condition of obtaining the*

highest character. That is conversion, the new birth, the beginning of a new life which is to grow unto perfection, a continued and eternal living of the heavenly life.

Education cannot take the place of this new life. "Education alone," says Herbert Spencer, in his *Social Statics*, "never makes a man better. Creeds pasted on the memory, good principles learned by rote, lessons in right and wrong, will not eradicate vicious propensities. . . . All history, both of the race and the individual, goes to prove that in a majority of cases precepts do not act at all. . . . But if you make virtue loved and vice loathed, if you arouse a noble desire, if you bring into life a previously dormant sentiment, . . . if, in short, you produce a state of mind to which proper behavior is natural, spontaneous, instinctive, you do some good." This expresses the need of religion behind education, the value of revivals, of decision days, of believing on Christ.

After that, education and culture have almost unlimited power. Inoculate the wild brier with the rose, and all the culture which would only make the wild brier a more luxuriant brier, but never a rose, will make it bring forth more beautiful roses more abundantly. "Golden conduct does not proceed from leaden instincts."

In a late story we read: "'You can educate men, monkeys, and pigs,' said the young professor of English Literature, 'but when you have done, you still have men, monkeys, and pigs. College cannot change the nature of the trainee, but it does rub off one husk, and show one central kernel. If there be a man there, college training but brings out the man.'"

A teacher said, "I would rather, a thousand times

rather, any pupil of mine should fail in every examination than to fail once in honor or chivalry."

It is this supreme motive that transforms all that is secular into the sacred for them that have it.

(3) *The training of the will is therefore one of the essential elements of education.* The child is to be trained, guided, to make right choices, in all the hourly matters which present themselves for a decision between right and wrong, between good and evil.

It is by these acts of choosing that character is formed and confirmed. According to Dr. Forbush in *The Boy Problem*, "the public school fails in will-training because it gives the will no exercise. 'Our schools,' says William I. Crane, 'permit us to think what is good, but not to do what is good.'"

I cannot do better than to state the case in the words of Professor R. Sanderson, superintendent of the city schools of Burlington, Iowa, in a remarkably clear and able address before the city Sunday School Union:—

"This is the preordained path by which the individual attains to Christian character, determined by the natural workings of the human mind,—thinking, feeling, willing,—and in this order. It is impossible for a man to feel unless there is an object presented; it is impossible to will unless the intellect has taken cognizance of a fact, and a sufficient amount of feeling is aroused in the contemplation of it. Before an intelligent act becomes possible, there must be knowledge, feeling, and willing. It is not necessary that the knowledge be either exhaustive or complete; still there must be enough to make the affections prompt the will to choose actively the 'doing' or 'not doing.' . . .

“Theoretically, that man has a perfect character whose intellectual perceptions arouse corresponding affections and terminate in appropriate willing and acting. This places character not in intelligence, not in large-heartedness, not alone in acting, but in a happy harmony and equipoise of all these. And the difference between men chiefly consists in the infinitely various ways in which these three departments of our nature act, interact, and react. . . .

“That man alone has a right character whose right thinking terminates in right acting, whose every thought has its appropriate emotion and willing.”

**Note** that while in the Sunday School there is but moderate opportunity for giving the will exercise, as in attention, faithfulness, reverence, kindness, obedience, yet the Sunday School teaching is geared on to the daily life at home, and the teaching is scarcely done before the child has abundant exercise for his will in putting the teaching into practice.

**Note** that through the minor choices the child is trained to make the supreme choice of his life.

**Note** that the supreme choice is often made in view of some small act close at hand in everyday experience, when the chooser does not at all realize the full measure of its content. He makes a choice of a right instead of a wrong act, and it is the beginning of a new life of serving and obeying Christ, the sum of all righteousness. Hence it so often happens that people brought up under Christian influences are not conscious of any definite time when they became Christians, while those before whom came the clearly defined choice of Christ or the world know definitely when they made their life decision.

**Note** again, that while every day is a “decision day,”



yet it is of great value to a young person to come face to face with some question when he must decide openly and positively where he will stand, through which decision he shall become conscious of his real position, and confirmed in it. Professor E. W. Scripture of Yale, in his book of psychological experiments, *Thinking, Feeling, Doing*, proves that in order to realize feelings, as of hot and cold, there needs to be a sudden change. In holding a spoon on the flame of a lamp, "when the heat was *gradually* increased it was scarcely noticed, but when *suddenly* increased it was clear at once." Although a frog jumps readily when put in warm water, yet a frog can be boiled without a movement if the water is heated slowly enough. "From psychological writers we have heard it repeated *ad nauseam* that there is no consciousness without change. These facts illustrate the necessity of sudden impulses, of great revivals, reformations, political excitements, unexpected results, to awaken a community to its needs or its dangers." Decision days are coming into use for the same reason.

(4) *The will is trained by presenting the motives which lead to action.* The will always acts in view of motives.

"The driving power which brings to the point of decision may be vivid emotion, or keen sorrow, or painful repentance, or the impulse of a high resolve, or the wooing of a great love, or a kindled passion after good and purity. But all the roads converge to this point of solemn reflection, when a man considers his life in the light of God's presence."<sup>1</sup>

The work of the Sunday School is like the work of the Church, as expressed by Professor Peabody of Harvard.

<sup>1</sup> Rev. Hugh Black of Edinboro.

“It is not one more machine of social service; it is a source of power for social service. That is the place of a true Christian Church. It is a power-house.” Mark Twain hit it when he said, “The art of preaching is to influence you.” The work of the teacher is to so present motives that his scholars will make the right choice and form the best characters.

Hawthorne, in one of his stories, describes a character which was paralyzed in the realm of motives. The man would look out of his window at the world, but felt himself as utterly detached from it as a door detached from its hinges, and as useless. The sign in the window, “To let,” describes exactly the state of the man’s motives; and the words *Cui bono?* — “What is the use?” were fastened upon every rising intention. The teacher is to give life and action to the realm of motives.

“Inasmuch,” says Commissioner W. T. Harris, “as the child is self-active, and grows only through the exercise of self-activity, education consists entirely in leading the child to develop this power of doing. Any help that does not help the pupil to help himself is excessive.”

(5) “The prescribed way — prescribed by nature — of reaching the will is, as related above, by presenting to the intellect facts which shall arouse the emotional nature.” These facts, for the teacher of the Sunday School, are chiefly the teachings of the Bible, illustrated in Bible history, biography, and literature, and experienced by the teacher himself. The Bible is the teacher’s text-book. No other book has had or can have the power which this Book has, presenting as it does the greatest truths revealed by God and adapted to man, meeting every need, quenching every thirst; the bread of life to the hungry; forgive-

ness for the sinful ; hope, life, immortality for all. It is the great, abiding, inspired truths of redemption, embodied in Jesus Christ, made mighty by His atoning love, and illuminated and enforced by the presence of the Holy Spirit, that can present the motives which lead to right choices and thence to Christian character. "The Church should never forget the saying of Coleridge, that no religious emotion is profitable except such as is produced by the view of some truth." But most of all by a clear vision of Him who was made flesh and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth.

(6) *In addition to the character forming truths*, there is very much to be taught from the Bible, that belongs to the divine setting of these truths, and therefore of great importance to the right understanding of them, and to their impression on the minds of our scholars. The geography, the history, the forms of literature, the connection with secular history, the location of the Prophets and Epistles in their historical environment, and all that is referred to in the chapters on Methods of Bible Study for the Sunday School belong under this category.

V. Having accepted the necessity for trained teachers, observed the present teaching force, realized that the kind of training depends on the aim of Sunday School instruction, and having studied that aim in its various aspects, we are now prepared to consider —

**What are the kinds of training which prepare the Sunday School teacher for his work, and what is the proper emphasis to be laid upon each of them ?**

**First.** Character training stands far above all others, for character is the greatest human agency known for inspiring character in others, and that is the supreme

object of Sunday School instruction. Character produces character ; love awakens love ; life is the only known source of life ; religious life kindles religious life in others ; and there is nothing can take its place for this end: Bible truth lived, Bible truth expressed in human character, Bible truth illustrated and explained in daily life, in "living epistles known and read of all." Souls grow by contact with other souls. The larger and fuller the spirit with whom we come into touch, and the more the points of contact, the more free and strong is our growth. Plautus says that "an eye witness is worth more than ten thousand ear witnesses."

Hon. S. B. Capen says, "Fellow-teachers, let us never forget in all our work that our words will never go any farther than our own lives will carry them. Back of the teacher and the teaching is the man himself, and not what we say but what we are will determine the force of our message. Emerson's words are forever true, 'What you are speaks so loud I cannot hear what you say.'"

I know of no discordant note among educators in the testimony that "the greatest thing a teacher ever brings to a child is not the subject-matter, but the uplift which comes from heart contact with a great personality."<sup>1</sup>

Professor Luther H. Gulick of New York, after a personal inquiry among leading men of the city as to the source from which they had gained most from their Sunday School experience, found that the scheme of lessons, the age or sex of teachers, had small influence compared with the character of the teachers.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *An Ideal School*, Chap. XII.

<sup>2</sup> Proceedings of the second annual meeting of the Religious Education Association.

In the *Forum* for March, 1896, President Charles F. Thwing records the results of "a very interesting study of fifty representative men to questions involving *the best thing college does for a man*. The entire drift of the testimony was that the most these men got from the college was inspiration from life contact with great leaders. The subject-matter of the college received a very small percentage of credit."

Dr. Parkhurst remarks, "While books can teach, personality only can educate."

"The most influential thing in the world," says Professor Whitney, "is, we suppose, what men see in other people's lives."

"No nobler feeling," says Carlyle, "than admiration for one higher than himself dwells in the breast of man. It is to this hour, and at all hours, the vivifying influence in man's life."

President Hadley, of Yale, says in a late article, "All the moral precepts which are taught, even by those great head masters who have the greatest reputation as moral teachers, are of little consequence as compared with the personality of those teachers themselves."

The ancient Persian monarchs acted on this principle when, according to Xenophon's *Memorabilia*, they selected for the training of their princes the four best men in their kingdom,—the *wisest* man, the *most just* man, the *most temperate* man, and the *bravest* man,—men who could teach the virtues well because they had experienced them, men who could illustrate them by living examples.

In his *Mosses from an Old Manse* Hawthorne tells a weird story of a chemist named Rappacini, who was investigating the nature of poisons, and had a charming

garden in which every plant and flower was poisonous. His beautiful daughter lived in this poison atmosphere till her whole nature became poisonous, so that at length flowers withered at her touch, insects flitting before her fell dead in her breath, and even spiders and reptiles perished, scorched and convulsed by her presence. And a young student, attracted by her beauty to walk in that Eden of poisons, was at length astonished and enraged to find himself, even by this partial abode there, so impregnated with the poison that the flies and spiders of his room withered in death when he breathed upon them, and this poison fragrance surrounded him everywhere like an atmosphere.

The reverse of this is still more true. Ingersoll is reported to have said that if he had been God, he would have made health catching instead of disease. But God has made moral good more catching than moral evil. Life has vastly more propagating power than death. We cannot communicate to others what we do not possess ourselves. The power of the preacher lies in the man behind the sermon. The power of the teaching lies in the teacher behind the teaching, so that the scholar can find —

“ His being working in my own,  
The footsteps of his life in mine.”

Here, then, is the supreme sphere of teacher training. Let us note several things in reference to it.

(1) This kind of teacher training is too often left out of the account or taken for granted, with the result of discouragement to good teachers, of a wrong emphasis on the work of training, and of a wrong principle of selection. The greatest danger in that excellent and necessary training so much insisted upon is well expressed by

Spurgeon's illustration of a "servant who was desired by his master to carry a present of fish to a friend and to do it as quickly as possible. In all haste the man seized a basket and set out; but when he reached his journey's end he became a laughing-stock, for he had forgotten the fish; his basket was empty. Teacher! Preacher! let not the like happen to thee." We cannot carry the fish without the basket, but the basket is of no use if it is empty.

(2) It is a teacher training that all can enjoy.

(3) It is gained through faithfulness in ordinary daily life, in business, in the home; amid cares and burdens and sorrows, personal trials and victories; through private communion with God and daily study of His Word.

(4) It is the preparation and training which uplifts the Church as well as the Sunday School.

(5) It furnishes a new inspiration for better living, for leaving off doubtful habits, for more earnest efforts for the better life, for larger victories over evil, because all these things are to have an effect upon the scholars under our care.

(6) And lastly this kind of training naturally leads to all other kinds of training which will make this kind most effective. A well-balanced character will never expect results without means, nor the best results without the best means at hand. The Holy Spirit continually uses means. The twelve fishermen Apostles were mighty when filled with the Spirit, but they had first been two or three years in the school of Christ.

"When one claimed that education was unnecessary because the Holy Spirit would guide into all truth, and added, 'The Lord can do without my knowledge,' a fitting rebuke was administered in the reply, 'Yes, but the Lord

can do still better without your ignorance.' 'Pour your teaching out of a full reservoir, not out of a pint cup.'"

**Second.** *The teacher is to be trained in knowledge of the Bible*, the intellectual and spiritual material he is to teach. He needs a thorough acquaintance with it in every respect. He must know Christ, in order to teach Him, and understand the very soul of His teachings in order to teach these.

The queen bee is produced from a common worker by being placed in a larger cell and fed with richer and more abundant food. The soul of the teacher expands, grows more beautiful, more powerful for good by more abundant feeding on the Bread of Life.

**Third.** *The teacher needs a training in the art of teaching* in the best methods of presenting, enforcing, illustrating, and applying the Bible truths. For teaching is an art to be learned. It has its laws and principles, and new light is being thrown upon the subject every day.

Some people are born with a genius for teaching; all the more will they gain from training, and all the more earnestly will they seek the training. But most have merely possibilities and need training in the art of teaching in order to make the possibilities realities. The *How to teach* is secondary in importance only to the *What to teach* in the work of religious instruction. "Education is not less a science, nor is teaching less an art because the exclusive subject of instruction is moral and religious truth."<sup>1</sup>

The most learned men are often very poor teachers. I frequently hear of men like the following:—

"One of the best Bible scholars that the writer has ever

<sup>1</sup> Henry Dunn, 1837. See Mr. W. H. Groser's *A Hundred Years' Work for the Children*, p. 103.



been privileged to meet was one of the worst teachers that ever plagued a class.”

And this from A. H. McKinney, Ph.D. : —

“My friend, the professor, is a veritable encyclopædia. His fund of information is seemingly inexhaustible. His knowledge of, and fluency in, several languages is astonishing. But he cannot teach. He descended as instructor from college to high school, to public school, to night school, but in every position he was a failure. There was no question concerning either the quantity or the quality of his book learning, but he did not know how to teach. This was the fatal defect that resulted in his professional death.”

The *How* to teach is so important that I can scarcely conceive of any teacher's not making it his most earnest study. Not only must there be pure water in the reservoir, but the best possible distributing system.

**Fourth.** *The teacher needs training in the study of the child*, in which study such great advances have been made within the past few years.

What my friend, Dean Alford A. Butler, writes concerning the pastor is equally true of the teacher : “The pastor who knows books and not men, who understands inspired truth but not human nature, is like a man in the desert throwing precious water at a collection of bottles that are securely sealed. He may enjoy his own activity, but the bottles are as empty at the end of the performance as they were at the beginning. Talking is not teaching, and preaching is not edification, though the torrent be as large and as loud as Niagara.”<sup>1</sup> “The deeper study of

<sup>1</sup> *The Sunday School Outlook. The Crypt Conference.* Address by Alford A. Butler, D.D., Dean of the Episcopal Divinity School, Faribault, Minn.

child nature holds in it large promise of better work for the future.”<sup>1</sup> Many a Sunday School teacher fails in governing, as well as in teaching his class, because he does not know his scholars.

Jesus attracted men because He understood them, He knew them through and through, He felt their difficulties, He sympathized with their struggles. He saw them as worse than they saw themselves, yet He showed no loathing, no scorn ; He felt no hate, no contempt ; He did not despise them as outcasts. But He loved them. He knew the good in them, He showed them that they were not hopeless. For the first time they heard a teacher who saw the possibilities within them, and treated them according to what they were, and flung wide open the door of repentance and hope and heaven.

Some wise thinker, whose name has escaped me, enforces the duty of child study in these earnest words : “ There is a sense, a real and awful sense, in which you stand between God and the children, and must communicate Him to them. Every teacher is in the highest sense of the word a priest, for God reveals Himself through men and women. It is one of the ways He has chosen, and we, who are all His servants, must try and be equal to the responsibility. And if we stand between God and the children, our hope of efficiency lies in our sharing alike the soul of the Eternal and the spirit of the little child. This latter is more important than we think, and there is no good teacher who is not also a child. I do not say we must be childish. I say we must be children when we are face to face with the little ones, for only the child-heart can communicate with the child-heart. There-

<sup>1</sup> Rev. A. F. Schauffler, D.D., in *Pastoral Leadership*, p. 64.

fore, amid all the pains that some of you are taking by the study of methods and systematic reading to fit yourselves for your task, do not forget the duty of a perpetual childhood."

VI. In view of these facts and principles, and in application of them to the present situation, our next inquiry is, **Who should be the teachers in the Sunday School?**

**Concerning Paid Teachers.** — There is a tendency in some quarters to advocate the employment of paid teachers in the Sunday School, as being better Bible scholars, and better trained in the methods of teaching; while of necessity the classes would be larger and the teachers fewer than in the ordinary Sunday School, it being claimed that it is more effective to have one large class under a trained teacher than several small classes under the ordinary teacher.

That depends.

In very large schools, especially those that are Mission Schools, a paid superintendent is often of great value. He becomes the pastor's assistant. He can do a great deal of work for the children during all the week, and become a power in the community. He needs to be as well educated as the pastor, but with special emphasis on this kind of work. Such paid assistants will doubtless increase in numbers, especially in cities, and they ought to. Smaller churches will very likely unite in employing such assistants. Where it is possible to have a business man, like Wanamaker at the Bethany Sunday School, in Philadelphia, or like Mr. Frank L. Brown, a man of wealth who gives his whole time to the Bushwick Avenue Methodist Episcopal Sunday School, Brooklyn, then this is the better way.

In these large schools, the primary or kindergarten teacher, who requires a costly two-years' course of train-

ing, may well be paid, and then give her whole time to the younger children.

Then there are special adult classes who wish to take up subjects which demand expert scholars; these may well employ for shorter or longer courses such scholars as may be obtained.

But beyond this, for the great body of Sunday Schools, and for the great majority of classes in any Sunday School, the substitution of paid teachers, with large classes, instead of the present plan perfected, would be nothing less than a calamity to the Churches and the Sunday Schools. It would be like going back to Plato's ideal Republic, where the children were to be taken from their parents and placed under trained nurses and teachers, where, whatever else they gained, they lost the mother love and its heavenly power.

Practically, this question is, for most schools, of little importance except as an ideal. For there are not enough of the talented, completely trained teachers to go round. And it would be impossible for most Churches to pay teachers in addition to their other expenses, at least sufficiently to attract real talent. It would be much better to make a liberal provision for training their own members to be good teachers. The Report of the United States Bureau of Education on Sunday Schools, 1896-1897, quotes the following:—

“Hireling teachers can scarcely be expected to possess either the zeal or the ability of those who now engage in the work from motives of pure benevolence. *Gratuitous instruction was an astonishing improvement of the system.*” Only in some small degree is it wise, even if possible, to return to the earlier plan.

Who then are the best available persons for our Sunday School teachers?

1. It is evident that both men and women teachers are needed, with no great preponderance of either.

2. The best men, the business men, the educated men, the men of character, the men of thought and action, in the Church. These help to give character to the Sunday School, as not an institution merely for the children and the uneducated, but one worthy of the best talent and best men. It is the presence of these men as teachers or scholars that furnishes the strongest attraction for keeping the young men in the Sunday School. The unofficial laymen's example can do what the pastor himself, or any paid official, cannot do. It is a sad thing for any Church when its leading men ignore the Sunday School.

3. The best women, the women of character, of graciousness, of culture, of influence. Let me speak to them in the glowing words of Ruskin: "You have heard it said that flowers only flourish rightly in the garden of some one who loves them. I know you would like that to be true; you would think it a pleasant magic if you could flush your flowers into brighter bloom by a kind look upon them: nay, more, if your look had the power not only to cheer but to guard them—if you could bid the black blight turn away, and the knotted caterpillar spare—if you could bid the dew fall upon them in the drought, and say to the south wind, in frost,—'Come, thou south, and breathe upon my garden, that the spices of it may flow out.' This you would think a great thing! And do you not think it a greater thing that all this (and how much more than this!) you *can* do, for fairer flowers than these,—flowers that could bless you for having

blessed them, and will love you for having loved them, — flowers that have eyes like yours, and thoughts like yours, — which once saved are saved forever? Is this only a little power?"<sup>1</sup>

4. Parents who have had experience with children know their nature, their faults, and their virtues, and know how to overcome their faults and cherish their virtues, who obey the Talmud's admonition that "children should be punished with one hand but caressed with two." Though they know as little of the theories of child-training as the great poets knew of the theories of the poetic art, yet the best men and women in the world have grown up under their training. God, through nature, has taught us where to find the best teachers of children.

In a note to Kant's *Educational Theory*, Professor Buchner says, "Modern pedagogy is coming more and more to ally the fundamental qualities of the real teacher to the characteristics of the maternal instincts, an extension of which should pass upward into the work of education."

In like manner an English writer tells us that a large number in our Sunday Schools do not have what he calls "moral mothering." "We never see the true work of the Sunday School while we regard it as only teaching the Bible. It is teaching the Bible as the agency for the moral mothering of our scholars. What the young people in our Sunday School lack, as the equipment for a life of relationships and duties, we — teachers — are called upon to supply; and for our work we shall have to develop systems and methods which will not follow the pattern of the day school, but the pattern of the Christian

<sup>1</sup> *Sesame and Lilies.*

mother, of a Christian home. Our ideal is not the cultured day school teacher, but the skilful home-mother."

5. Intelligent young people, bright, active, and earnest, who are striving to be better, struggling upward with many a failure and many a victory, are within easy memory of their childhood's experience, in close sympathy with the young. These often are looked up to and admired by their juniors, and frequently have more influence over the young, especially over boys, than their wiser and more learned elders.

6. Christian day school teachers are very useful in the Sunday School. It is something like their usual work, and therefore more valuable in Sunday School. And it would be better for them to neglect some other service than the hour with the children, for which they have been specially trained, and through which they may have a good influence over other teachers.

These are the best available material for the teaching force of the Sunday School.

These people need a continual training in the material for teaching and the methods of teaching; exactly what would be best for them as Christians, even if they were not teachers.

There is nothing that so much aids the study of the Bible among Christians as the work of teaching in the Sunday School. It is the surest road to Christian culture. It is the greatest educational force for the whole Church.

This fact gives an additional reason for small classes, and many of them. It is best for the scholars to have classes only large enough to be enthusiastic and mutually helpful, not so large but the busy teacher can know them

all, visit them all. There are exceptions, but the whole tendency of Educational Science is in favor of smaller classes. Many a teacher is a success with six or eight scholars, who would be a failure with ten or twelve. It gives many definite Christian work to do. A large part of the training of adults comes from dealing with children. "I am sure that Victor Hugo was right when he said that God's —

“ . . . speech is in their halting tongue  
And His forgiveness in their smile.”

Look on your children as in part a revelation of God, and your very teaching work itself shall create something of its own spiritual energy, and hence provide you from itself with Divine momentum and spiritual dynamic.”

This training of the Church reacts on the home and on the Sunday School. No specially trained teachers from without can begin to have as much influence for good as a trained Church in the Sunday School. There is an immense amount of nonsense uttered about the scholars despising those teachers who are not as technically trained as their day school teachers. I cannot find that there is as much of that feeling in the Sunday School as in the day school and college. Of course there is apt to be a stage in the development of young people when, according to Professor Stalker, they agree with Carlyle in thinking mankind mostly fools and those older persons who do not agree with them old fogies. But children do not usually despise those who love them, and have real character, even if they have not every detail of knowledge at their tongue's end, any more than a freshman despises a college president because he may not be able to pass his own entrance examination.



It is not very uncommon for teachers, when they have heard a convention lecture on the ideal teacher to be so discouraged at their distance from the ideal that they want to give up their classes, and the better teachers they are, the more modest they are apt to be about their own attainments.

If the twelve apostles, "unlearned and ignorant men," should come incognito and apply to be teachers, they would be ruled out by many theorists, and yet by going to the School of Christ, and receiving the baptism of the Holy Spirit, they have transformed a large part of the world. Just such men and women are in our Sunday Schools to-day, and what they are to do is not to leave the school, not give up their teaching, but to do exactly what the apostles did, — go to school to Christ and open their souls to the Holy Spirit.

The school is improved, not so much by exchanging poor teachers for better ones as by changing them into better teachers; changing the hot-blooded Simon into Peter the rock, and the "son of thunder" into Saint John.

It is helpful to know that almost all the good work in the world is done by imperfect men and imperfect instruments. Every hero has been vulnerable at some point; every saint has failed in one direction at least.

"There's a fleck of rust on a flawless blade —  
On the armor of price there's one;  
There's a mole on the cheek of a lovely maid —  
There are spots upon the sun.

"But the blade of Damascus has succored the weak,  
The shield saved a knight from a fall;  
The mole is a grace on my lady's cheek —  
The sun, it shines for all."

The most entrancing vision of beauty I ever beheld was the view from the Eiffel Tower, looking down at night upon the enclosure of the Exposition buildings in Paris. The architecture of the buildings themselves was outlined in golden and silver light. The very trees bore fruit of electric lights. The groups of statuary were illuminated. The lawns were like immense emeralds surrounded by frames of golden light. The illuminated fountains, not from light thrown upon them as often seen at Saratoga and Niagara Falls, but from light underneath, threw up their waters in a glorious changing harmony of brilliant colors, like variegated fireworks. It was like a dream of Paradise, a vision of fairy-land. Then it came to me that all this beauty was made from the grass and water and light of our common, everyday life; and that so God can take the materials now in our souls, and in society, and transform them into the glories of his new Jerusalem.

The last thing for us to do is to be discouraged by high ideals.

“If only we strive to be pure and true,  
To each of us there will come an hour  
When the tree of life shall burst into flower,  
And rain at our feet the glorious dower  
Of something grander than ever we knew.”

**VII. The Church should provide the Means for Teacher Training.** — **First**, there should be a **Reference Library**, always open to all at all times. It should contain not only books on the Bible, and on the lessons as they come, but books on the art of teaching, pedagogy, on child nature, and child training, as Carlyle says, “The true university of these days is a collection of books.”

**Second. Courses of Study.** — The Churches, as part of their regular expenses, should furnish courses of instruction on the Bible, on pedagogy, and on child study, for the teachers, and equally for all the community. They will create a general interest, and furnish instruction which will be a benediction to the home, and thus react upon the Sunday School.

In the Sunday School of which I am a member, we have tried various tentative ways of carrying out this plan. The speakers have been, as far as possible, experts in secular education, who also have experience in Sunday Schools, teachers and head masters of large schools from our own and other cities, state agents of our educational system, supervisors of schools, professors in theological seminaries, and in normal schools, and some from our own church and school. These all have received payment with the invitation, except our own members.

We have held the meetings on Sunday afternoons, on Sunday evenings, after the weekly prayer meeting, and in place of the weekly prayer meeting on alternate weeks, with special music. I very much incline to favor this latter plan, alternating the religious experience meetings with educational study of the Bible. It is very difficult in these times of many interests to make a success of such a course of study on a separate evening.

These courses have all been free since the first one, when a class was formed. They have been advertised by programmes, and as far as possible there has been union with other churches.

**Third. Specimen Teaching.** — There should be much more learning from others than has been common. It is often almost a revelation. Take pains to go into the classes

of the best teachers in your own and in other schools. In normal schools there are model schools, where the students, having learned principles and theories from other teachers, go to see these principles and theories put into practice. All efforts to form an idea of the Golden Candlestick from the descriptions were failures till a model of it was found on the Arch of Titus.

Bishop Vincent, in his *Modern Sunday School*, has some admirable suggestions on this point.

“One can do any piece of work the better for having first seen the same thing done by another. Young teachers of the Bible should enjoy frequent opportunities of this kind in their special work. We place such observation of actual teaching only second in practical value to the young teacher’s practice under the eye and subject to the keen criticism of the accomplished instructor. The very best use of specimen teaching is that proposed some years ago by an efficient Sunday School superintendent, who, feeling the need of raising up a better class of young teachers, thus proposed to utilize the weekly services of his very best teachers : —

“I propose to appoint in my school a corps of assistant teachers. These assistant teachers are to be selected from our oldest scholars, and are each to sit and recite with some one of the classes for two or three Sundays, and then with another class, and so on, until each assistant shall have had an opportunity of noting the methods of management and instruction adopted by a majority of the regular teachers. They are always to *recite* and take part in the lesson in the class with which they sit, so as not to embarrass the teacher. They are to take private notes, and compare for themselves the different methods of

instruction, culling out the best features in each. With the practical information thus obtained, revised and strengthened by a further comparison with the systems reported in the published works upon the subject, these assistants will be prepared to enter upon their work with great advantages, and we shall never be at a loss to supply a class with an efficient instructor, nor to provide a substitute for an absent teacher.

“These assistants are to pledge themselves never, either publicly or privately, to make comparisons between the methods of the teachers whom they watch, but are to keep wholly and sacredly to themselves the result of their observations. They may, at the end of their probation, give a synoptical memorandum of the different modes noticed, and of the excellences and deficiencies observed, provided it is done in such a manner as not to connect the one or the other with any individual. These precautions seem necessary, in order to prevent the possibility of ill-feeling or embarrassment among the regular teachers from a criticism of their efforts.”

It seems wise to have, more frequently than of late, model classes in our Sunday School institutes and conventions.

**Fourth. Teachers' meetings** impart knowledge, inspire interest, and awaken suggestions. (I knew well the head master of a city school, who said that the most he gained from a certain Saturday afternoon Bible class was that he taught on Sunday just the opposite ideas with a great deal of enthusiasm.) Teachers' meetings give real specimen lessons and show the other teachers not only *what* to teach, but *how* to teach.

It is a great thing in any city to have a Union Teachers' Meeting taught by the best teacher within reach.

Each Sunday School should have a teachers' meeting of its own for various purposes. But there should be great variety in its methods. Unless there is some teacher who stands far above all others, it is better to have more than one teacher, not only because it is difficult to find any one person who can give the time to it, but also because it gives more examples of teaching methods.

An adaptation of this method shown me by Mr. Charles G. Trumbull of *The Sunday School Times*, in the Walnut Street Presbyterian Sunday School of Philadelphia, is remarkably ingenious, and equally successful. For the second quarter there were nine leaders, and thirteen "angles" or points of view, each of them under the charge of a separate person, as "approach," "Lesson story," "Orientalisms," "difficulties," "primary," each leader notifying in advance those of them who would be needed for his particular lesson. This meeting was held just before the weekly prayer meeting.

**Fifth. The Normal Class, the Teachers' Class.** — The study of children under our care, the note-book like Emerson's which he called his Savings Bank — all are helpful means of training ourselves to become good teachers.

"It is the truth which has become a personal conviction, and is burning in a man's heart so that he cannot be silent, which is his message."

"The number of such truths which a man has appropriated from the Bible and verified in his own experience is the measure of his power."<sup>1</sup>

"The gold of thought has generally to be collected as gold dust."

"It takes a bushel of charcoal to form one diamond."

<sup>1</sup> Rev. James Stalker in *The Preacher and his Models*.

**Sixth. Learning by Teaching.** — “Aristotle long ago said that playing on the harp was learned by playing on the harp.” All the lessons in grammar and the theories of poetry never made a good writer or a good poet, except as he consciously or unconsciously put them into practice.

“The Church has an advantage here which few public schools possess. It is a community of men and women who are learning to live together. Its object is not merely to know, but to do, and to learn by doing. The laboratory method may be slowly and painfully introduced into our schools; it is the very life of our Churches.”<sup>1</sup>

“Theory,” says Professor Hamill, “is a good thing; practice is its coördinate — not a better thing, but another good thing. . . . I believe in practice, but take care that you do not practise blunders, else you may become successful only as a blunderer. I have known teachers who persisted in practising with great diligence and patience, but in the end it was a blunder which had been the subject of practice. Be not discouraged if you make mistakes in your practice. I believe it was Carlyle who said, ‘Heaven was made for those who blundered on earth.’ The man who blunders but turns his blunders into steps heavenward, is the man who succeeds. If you do not practise your blunders, but practise your own successes and the successes of other people, you will surely acquire the art. . . .

“It needs to be impressed upon those who desire to teach yet are reluctant to assume the teacher’s obligations, that the way is open, by practice, and through the helpful

<sup>1</sup> President Faunce at the R. E. A. meeting in Philadelphia.

experiences of other teachers, to certain efficiency in the art of Sunday School teaching.”<sup>1</sup>

We learn not only how to teach, but the substance of the teaching, by teaching. Imparting knowledge is one of the greatest helps toward gaining knowledge.

Why is a city richer than the same number of acres of pasture land? It is because it is the centre into which all things flow, and are poured out again by every avenue of commerce. There is no other way for the soul to grow rich except by making it the highway through which knowledge and life and love come from God, and are sent on to help and bless others.

“For the heart grows rich in giving:  
All its wealth is living grain.  
Seeds which mildew in the garner,  
Scattered, fill with gold the plain.”

In the words of Archbishop Trench:—

“Dig channels for the streams of Love  
Where they may broadly run;  
And Love has overflowing streams  
To fill them every one.

“But if at any time thou cease  
Such channels to provide,  
The very springs of Love for thee  
Will soon be parched and dried.

“For we must share, if we would keep,  
That good thing from above;  
Ceasing to give, we cease to have,  
Such is the law of Love.”

May we all join the glorious company of the trained teachers.

<sup>1</sup> Professor Hamill in *The Sunday School Teacher*.



## VI

### A STUDY IN GRADING

**The Necessity for Grading.** — That the Sunday School should be graded not only “goes without saying,” but it has been going with saying for many years. Child-study, pedagogy, psychology, common sense, present experience, and past experience all unite in demanding it, with no discordant voice.

Grading is no late discovery. No new Columbus, sailing over unknown seas and steering by the compass of pedagogical principles, has suddenly discovered a hitherto unknown continent in the Sunday School world. No modern Kepler has worked out by scientific principles what ought to be, and, pointing his telescope to the Sunday School heavens, has revealed a new planet there called Grading. Progress is seldom made in that way.

#### **What is New in Grading.**

1. A *new emphasis* is laid on Grading, urging its necessity, and creating a wider realization of its value, necessity, and possibility, and arousing a deeper interest in the movement.

2. *New methods* of Grading are peopling and developing the old continent, as America has been developed in the last century. It is removing the fogs and clearing the atmosphere so that the old stars shall shine with more enlightening radiance.

3. A *new opportunity* is made possible by the progress of the past.

4. There is a *wider extension* of its practice and an increasing number of experiments.

5. There has been a *new development* of the sciences which enforce the necessity and guide by their principles.

“The authority for such a plan is abundant,” says Professor E. P. St. John. “The Sunday School is the educational department of the Church, and every educator stands as a champion of gradation. Every study of childhood indicates its value. Every systematic and progressive course of Bible study requires it. The laws of teaching make it essential, and the methods of teaching are adapted to it.”

Here, as in other departments, there is an imperative need that the Sunday Schools all over the land should see the FRONT LINE and come up to it and march on with it; for the Front Line itself is hourly moving forward. All the Sunday School leaders desire a better grading than exists in most schools. They “are stretching forward to the things which are before.” They are pressing “on toward the goal.”

“He who says ‘I want no more,’  
Confesses he has none.”

Dean Swift, in a reform address, illustrated his point by the story of one of his neighbors who, by his industry and skill, was becoming rich. It happened that during the process he had been “troubled by violent stomachic pains, for which he had found no relief and which were the bane and torment of his life.”

“Now,” continues the Dean, “if my excellent laborer

were to send for a physician and to consult him respecting this malady, would it not be very singular language if our doctor were to say to him: 'My good friend, you surely will not be so rash as to attempt to get rid of these pains in your stomach! Have you not grown rich with these pains in your stomach? Have you not risen under them from poverty to prosperity? Has not your situation, since you were first attacked, been improving every year? You surely will not be so foolish and indiscreet as to part with the pains in your stomach!'

"What would be the answer of the rustic to this nonsensical monition? 'Monster of rhubarb!' he would say, 'I am not rich in consequence of the pains in my stomach, but in spite of the pains in my stomach; and I should be ten times richer and fifty times happier if I had never had any pains in my stomach at all.'"

Sunday Schools have prospered with the evil of very imperfect grading. They have done a vast amount of good. They have educated and sent forth a multitude of noble men and women. But, like Dean Swift's parishioner, they have reached this degree of prosperity and noble fruitage, not on account of bad grading, but in spite of it. For there is no question that a wise grading makes the teaching easier, the instruction more efficient, and the results more fruitful.

**Grading** is the systematic adaptation of the school, including, —

the lessons taught,  
the classification of the pupils,  
the fitness of the teachers,  
the methods of teaching,  
the equipment required,

to the age, the intelligence, the different stages of growth and development of the various members of the school.

“It is really an attempt to do God’s work in God’s way, to do the right thing in the right way for every pupil in the school.”<sup>1</sup>

All the above five parts of the school must join in harmony, if we would have the best work. “Graded teachers will not atone for ungraded courses of study. Graded teachers and graded courses will not atone for ungraded pupils. And graded teachers and graded pupils combined cannot atone for the lack of properly graded courses of study.”<sup>2</sup>

**I. The graded course of lessons must be graded both in Material and in Treatment.**

**II. The pupils are to be graded** by putting them into classes or groups of classes of the same general age and acquirements, especially those accustomed to be together in day school classes.

In very large schools there are many advantages in having a separate room for each department, with its own opening exercises and methods. In every school the Primary department should have a separate room whenever possible, because everything connected with its management differs from those in the other grades far more than the other grades differ from one another.

In smaller schools it is much better to have the whole school (except the primary and an occasional special class of adults, who need all the hour for the lesson) meet together for the devotional exercises, reports, and neces-

<sup>1</sup> Professor E. P. St. John, Superintendent of the N. Y. State S. S. Association.

<sup>2</sup> S. B. Haslett, Ph.D., in *The Pedagogical Bible School*.

sary business, and then retire to class rooms, if such rooms can be obtained. In small schools it is often better to have even the primary class meet for a part of this time with the rest of the school, and give some of the songs or responses.

Many a school loses interest and power and enthusiasm because of too great a separation of departments. I have known schools where the Intermediate and lower departments were intensely interesting, but the Senior department dull and lifeless and unattractive, because of its entire separation from the children ; and the seniors complain of this state of things. It is unwise to exploit a part of the school at the expense of the others, for this injures all departments ; it prevents the older scholars from remaining in the school.

The fact is, that all things in the school — courses of study, classification, methods — are compelled to be modified from the pure individual ideal, in order to work well together. You cannot have even the best poetry or the best music in the world without modifying its various elements from what would be ideal for each separate element. In music, for instance, no organ or piano can be perfectly tuned in each octave without making horrible discords when different octaves are played together.

Many of the criticisms of the Sunday School are unfair, and many idealists' plans and experiments fail from ignoring this fact.

Rev. E. Morris Fergusson, of Trenton, New Jersey, one of the most wide-awake, talented, and progressive of state Sunday School secretaries, wisely says : "The social and spiritual benefits of gradation are of more importance than

the strictly educational benefits. The advantage to the primary child of being in a well-organized Primary Department comes partly from the good lessons taught by the primary teacher, but much more from the fact that the child is a member of a department that is run for the benefit of children from six to eight years of age. The teaching is much; but the life, the social atmosphere, the spiritual stimulus and opportunity, the chance to live out the child's whole natural life during the primary period, — these are far more. Establish a Junior Department for the children from nine to twelve, and give it the best makeshift you can find for a separate room, and you begin to create the same kind of a helpful atmosphere for the juniors to grow in, before you have touched the lessons at all. So with the big intermediate boys and girls; so with the young ladies and gentlemen of the Senior Department; so with all."

**III. The grading of teachers** means the finding or training of teachers who are peculiarly adapted to certain stages of the child's development, and keeping them in the same department from year to year, while the pupils they teach pass from grade to grade, changing teachers as they advance.

Mr. Fergusson continues: "Teachers who belong to the grade, and who are willing to devote their Sunday School lives, for Christ's sake, to the study of the problem of teaching boys and girls of junior or intermediate or senior age, these are what our Sunday Schools need more than separate rooms or graded lessons. . . . But first we need, for each grade, a permanent force of teachers."

This grading of teachers, though in actual use for many years in the Primary Department, needs such a widening

of scope as Mr. Fergusson suggests. But the grading of teaching should be by *departments*, and not by annual courses or by a particular kind of lessons, as the Old Testament, or the Gospel story, because a continued dwelling in one portion of the Bible alone is narrowing, and needs the broadening effect of wider study and wider teaching. Leading educators are condemning the method of keeping teachers too long in any one small grade in the day schools, but advocating the retaining of them in the larger departments.

To quote from Dr. Charles Roads, in a manual issued by the Pennsylvania State Sabbath School Association: "Experts with each period are required, and to produce these experts the teacher must be joined to the department rather than to one class for a long term of years. A teacher takes a class for four or five years through a department, then remains to carry another class through it, while the students receive the benefit of another expert teacher in the next grade. The peril of having only one teacher in a child's whole Sunday School life, and he or she with one-sided character or unhelpful spirit, is very great. All of us are imperfect, and the best character development comes from three or four good teachers influencing successively; and when each teacher becomes an expert in a department the power of the influence exerted is multiplied. We actually can report that the personal ties become stronger, the personal influence more powerful, and no complete breaking of old ties is necessary when promotion occurs. The former teacher continues helpful."

For the intermediate and senior grades a very large proportion of teachers can adapt themselves to any of the

grades at will, with some special study and good common sense.

But in every place we find those who have peculiar gifts, sometimes undeveloped till put into use. One has a great gift in teaching boys; give him boys to teach, and put no limit to the numbers except the limit of his ability. Some can teach boys or girls of college age with great acceptance and power. For special adult classes there are required experts in different directions. For many of them different teachers are required for the same class at different times. In all cases use graded teachers whenever they can be found.

But do not let your good teachers be discouraged because they feel that they have no special talent. In the day school the average intelligent person is trained for almost any position in the schools. The same is true of Sunday School teachers.

### SCHEMES OF GRADING

The simplest, most natural, and abiding scheme, adapted in a way to all schools, is that of Three Great Departments, each of which may be subdivided into courses or grades, according to circumstances.

|  |  |
|--|--|
| CRADLE ROLL. — Not meeting with the school, but belonging to it.   |  |
| DEPARTMENTS  | 1. <b>Primary.</b> Eight or nine years of age and under; same as Primary in day schools. |
|  | 2. <b>Intermediate or general school.</b> Equivalent to Grammar Schools.                 |
|  | 3. <b>Senior.</b> Equivalent to High School grade and upward.                            |
| HOME DEPARTMENT. — Not meeting with the school, but members of it. |  |



Note that in a broad way these correspond to the larger, distinctive divisions of the day schools, — Primary, Grammar, and High.

They make a distinction between the grades and departments.

All kinds of Sunday Schools have something of these grades, "whether or not blind eyes perceive them." I have never seen an entirely ungraded school. Even the poorest are not fairly compared with the old ungraded day schools, where one teacher taught all grades and all kinds of lessons. Yet there needs to be a more clear distinction and a better use of these grades to make a school fully graded. But the method of promotion is not a test as to the *fact* of gradation.

**It is between these departments** that there should be some definite mark of promotion. The scholars should be made to perceive that in going up from one to another, an advance is made to a distinctly higher position, like the change from the Grammar School to the High School.

**This is a distinction of no small importance** if we would keep the young men and women in the Sunday School. Professor Irving F. Wood of Smith College made a strong point of this in a late address. He says truly that we must do one of two things if we would keep the young men in the Sunday School, and thus preserve the spiritual results of the long years that have gone before.

One method is for the parents and grandparents to attend the school, in which case there is no special danger of the children's feeling that they have outgrown it.

The other method is "to give the upper grades the relative dignity which the High School has in the public

school system," and we might add, to give wherever possible something of the college grade to selected classes. Professor Wood enforces this principle from his own experience. "I confess that it is usually painful to attend a service on Children's Sunday, because, when the children march in, one so pities the big boys who end the long line. They cannot be called children by any figure of speech, and yet their loyalty to the Sunday School drives them to this position. I take off my hat to their heroism. At the same time I recall an overgrown lad who refused, on a like occasion, to march or sit with his class, and fled to a safe retreat in the gallery. My recollection is without either shame or penitence. I stand ready at any time to aid and abet a rebellion of that sort. No one has a right, at the very time when we want to make the strongest spiritual impression, to submit the pride of growing youth to such humiliation. Our general system of classification will get rid of that by and by."

Margaret Meredith adds this testimony: "It is felt that grown persons are very hard to induce to attend Sunday School. I cannot believe that, for the only school in which I ever saw the same steady effort made to invite them which is made for children was entirely successful. . . .

"Grown people, both men and women, can only be drawn into Sunday School if the ideas of childishness and ignorance be carefully disassociated with their attendance there; to this end one easy and efficient measure is scrupulously to call all your adult classes 'Bible Classes.' Also, in providing lesson helps for them, provide Bible class helps if such are given to any scholars."

This distinct advance is usually made in transferring scholars from the Primary department to what is usually

the main school. Let the same be done now for those who go up to the High School grade.

An advance on this scheme which the majority of schools can adopt consists of the following grades, the names of which were agreed upon unanimously by the Editors' Association last June, in the following order, —

- |              |                  |
|--------------|------------------|
| 1. Primary,  | 3. Intermediate, |
| 2. Junior,   | 4. Senior,       |
| 5. Advanced. |                  |

the Cradle Roll and Home Department being understood.

The three large departments are the basis of a more complete grading: —

| DEPARTMENTS                                | GRADES  | PSYCHOLOGICAL DIVISION: AVERAGE AGES           |
|--|---|--|
| I. Primary                                 | Cradle Roll.<br>1. Kindergarten.  | 3 to 6 years; those unable to read.            |
| II. Intermediate or main school.           | 2. Primary.<br>3. Junior.   | 6 to 8 or 9 years.<br>9 to 11 years.           |
| III. Senior, or advanced, or Bible classes | 4. Intermediate.<br>5. Young people.<br>6. Adults or Advanced.<br>7. Special elective classes.<br>8. Normal and teacher-training classes. | 11 or 12 to 15 or 16.<br>15 years and upwards. |
| Home Department.                           |   |  |

There are schools which are experimenting with schemes of grading with a different grade for each year, but in the schools with which I am acquainted the experiment has not been going on long enough to test its value.

## OBSERVATIONS

1. These grades must be very flexible. In the best day schools there is a strong tendency to modify strict grading. Professor Search in his *Ideal School* contends that years are lost in the common graded school by the brighter scholars being kept down to the average. "There is no objection to classification, provided it is of flexible character. Certainly there is some advantage in gathering into working sections pupils of kindred interest, and, to a certain extent, of the same general working strength. What is contended against is the assumption that the graded organization as operated almost universally in the public schools meets the requirements of the needs of individual schools. . . . The graded school does not grade."

A professor in a great University tells me, at the time of this writing, that the danger of the Sunday School is the adoption of day school systems which are being discounted already by the best day schools, and especially of the attempt to

2. Grade the Sunday School by the Grammar School grades of the same scholars, which is pedagogically wrong, except in the general way referred to above. The subjects of study are too different to apply the same grading to both Sunday and day schools. One scholar may be advanced in historical, or thoughtful subjects, several degrees beyond the arithmetic or geography by which he is graded in the grammar school. There are many other things which should be used in making tests for the grades to which a Sunday School scholar should belong.

3. The tests of grading must also, of necessity, be very flexible. I know of no Sunday Schools, even those which

pride themselves on the completeness of the grading, where the test of advancement to a higher grade is purely the scholar's knowledge of the regular lessons of the previous year. Mere age is not a scientific test, but it must be one of the considerations, or some of those who most need the Sunday School will be driven away, with no advantage to scholar or school, but only to an imperfect theory.

In quite a number of schools, using different courses of lessons, the grading is in accordance with certain supplemental lessons. This is good for the advancement from the Primary to the Intermediate, because such lessons form part of the regular course there; but beyond that the supplemental lesson test is unpedagogical except as one means of ascertaining the scholars' fitness for higher grade material and methods.

The scholar's general fitness for a grade is the real test, however that fitness is ascertained, modified by the value to him of various kinds of knowledge taught only in certain grades, or of finishing a course he has begun.

There is no little incentive to good work arising from the privilege of advancement whenever prepared for it. Since the younger Sunday School scholars are also in the day schools, there must be the same variations of progress in both; and Professor Search gives tabulated experiments, in which, in a course of Latin, the scholars' progress varied in the proportion of 40 for the lowest to 140 for the highest, and in arithmetic from 140 for the lowest to 479 for the highest, *i.e.* in each study the highest was about  $3\frac{1}{2}$  times beyond the lowest.

It is plain that throughout the school there must be great flexibility in grading and grading tests, or the

history of the school will be but a parallel to Hawthorne's short story of *The Birth-Mark*, where the professor had a wife of exquisite beauty, the only imperfection in which was a birth-mark on her cheek. By means of chemicals and various experiments he had succeeded in gradually reducing the marring color and the size of the spot; but when the last experiment had succeeded, the disfigurement had vanished and he had a perfect wife, but she was dead.

4. Another reason for this flexibility lies in the fact that the scholars in every school are changing, some falling out and others entering; and part of the mission of every Sunday School is to reach out a helping hand and a cordial welcome to those who are neglected.

5. This flexibility does not mean that grading is to be neglected. On the contrary, it is absolutely necessary to every good Sunday School.

But the improvement of the grading or the introducing of a good graded system into any school is a difficult matter for most pastors and superintendents, and is usually dreaded by them. I commit them to the wise and helpful words of that prince among Sunday School workers, Rev. Dr. A. F. Schauffler of New York, in his *Ways of Working*. Whosoever will follow his advice and enter in earnest upon the attempt, though he will be discouraged at times, will find at last that, "like Alice in the Looking-Glass Country, when he thinks that he has at last got out of sight of the house, he is just walking in at the front door."

6. It has been well said that "in secular schools the lowest and the highest, the Kindergarten and the University, are best equipped, and the middle ranges need

reform. Here only the lowest has yet received adequate attention." The early child-life has received the most attention from psychologists. The adult grades have always been studied, and the grading of the lesson for them is easier than for the lower grades. Very much is being done for Bible classes, normal classes, men's elective classes; and more remains to be done in the development of this higher grade. But in the Sunday School, as in the day school, the middle ranges now need the largest attention.

I would adopt the words of the preface of Professors Burton and Mathews' *Principles and Ideals*, "We venture to hope that what we have written will be of value for teachers of those classes whose pupils constitute what is perhaps the greatest problem of the Sunday School, the boys and girls of grammar-school and high-school age."

**Courses of Study.** — Before the International system was introduced in 1872, the Sunday School courses were in a very chaotic condition. A great deal of good work was done. Individual systems were some of them very good. But I found it almost impossible to take the Sunday Schools, very much of the time, out of the Gospels. Once or twice my schools began on Genesis, but refused to continue through the year. There was almost nothing in this country for real help for scholar or teacher. The English Sunday Schools were in advance of ours in that respect.

That the International system met a great need was shown by its sudden spreading like wildfire over the entire country. I remember it well because just at that time, while an active pastor, feeling deeply the need of a change, I prepared a semi-graded course on the Gospel in

the Old Testament. Early in the first year of the actual use of the International system, I presented my manuscript to the publishers, and they all refused even to look at it, because, as they said, nothing was selling except the International helps.

That system created a new era in the Sunday School world. It is hard for one to realize the greatness of the change, who has not worked under the older plan; and as a burnt child dreads the fire, so such a one dreads the modern tendency toward a similar chaos.

The International system has been under the fire of criticism from the beginning. Most of the earlier criticisms have passed away, partly because of their nature, and partly because they had accomplished their mission of improving the system. None of them were embodied, to any extent, in working forms.

Within a few years a new series of criticisms has arisen, partly from the success of the prevailing system in uplifting the whole Sunday School movement, so that its very atmosphere has changed as from April to June; and partly because of the marvellous development of the sciences on which both Bible study and the art of teaching depend. The whole educational world has received new light from both science and experience.

These criticisms have taken form in new courses of study of various kinds, some of them still in the theoretical stage, and some tested by actual use.

The Bible Study Union Graded Lesson system, the earliest and the most widely extended of all these systems, was conceived and has been built up by my neighbor and friend Rev. Erastus Blakeslee. By his teaching genius, his intense energy, and the organizing skill through which



he won his spurs in the army and the military title of General, he organized success for his new scheme, which is now so well known.

The Lutheran General Council have issued an interesting series of graded lessons in the form of bound books, one for each grade (published also in quarterly form), — *Pictureland, Workland, Bible Story, Bible History, Bible Geography, Bible Biography, Bible Teachings, and Bible Literature*. “The General Council Graded System for Sunday and Church schools covers all ages of Biblical instruction in simple and definite stages from the Kindergarten to the College, from the Infant school to the Bible class, with full text-books and apparatus, each a complete unit in itself.”

“The Young Churchman Co., Milwaukee, publishes a series of a dozen or more graded courses which are coming into general use in Episcopal schools.”

Beyond these I know of no complete series of graded lessons (aside from the International) that have been tested in any large number of schools; and these have been subjected to severe criticism, in proportion to the time they have been used. It makes a great difference whether a system is in the theoretical stage or in the working stage. “It is a useful experience to change from the position of the criticiser to that of the criticised.”

Besides these a considerable number of Sunday Schools are making their own courses. “The lesson woods are full of new sprouts of this kind, some of which may yet, by careful and assiduous cultivation, branch out in great breadth and power.” — Dr. Blackall.

Quite a large number of theoretical courses have been prepared and published.

And lastly there are partial courses, chiefly for the Primary or adult departments.

The Chicago University Press is preparing a graded course of **Constructive Bible Studies**, of which some of the books for the Academy and College and Universities are published, and also a very interesting volume for the Elementary grades by Miss Georgia Louise Chamberlin, who has a very successful children's department in the Hyde Park Baptist Sunday School of which President Harper is superintendent.

The International Committee of the Young Men's Christian Association has three courses ; the United Society of Christian Endeavor has a course ; *Christian Nurture*, New Haven, Connecticut, has four courses ; The Rainbow Publishing Co., Manchester, New Hampshire, has six courses ; *Bible Studies*, Elyria, Ohio, has three or four courses.

The American Institute of Sacred Literature, Chicago, and the Moody Bible Institute of Chicago, each have a number of correspondence courses for non-residents.

**The Good in these Systems.** — 1. They have great virtues in themselves. They mark a real and strong movement of progress toward better Sunday School work.

2. They do a still greater good in pioneering improvements in the International Lesson System, used by nearly thirteen millions of people in this country and about half as many more in other lands.

During the late war in South Africa the eight-year-old grandson of Hon. John W. Foster, ex-Secretary of State, wrote a little book on the Boer War, the sale of which added several hundred dollars to the relief fund. One of the brightest things in this bright book is the story of some soldiers practising gunnery, and using for their mark

a flock of ten goats in a distant field. When they had fired twenty shots they went to see the results of their marksmanship, and found that there were eleven goats instead of ten; *one had been born during the firing.*

A similar result has followed the practice firing of criticism, both by speech and by example, upon the International Lesson System. It has more virtues than it had before.

As in the day school about 95 per cent of new educational experiments fail to establish themselves,<sup>1</sup> so a certain number, but much smaller, of these Sunday School experiments will prove fruitless. But the large valuable remainder will do a considerable part of its work in improving the system now in largest use, and the best in them will be absorbed in it.

In official document No. 2, containing the programme of the first Religious Association convention, is this statement: "The Sunday School situation is at present this: The mass of the schools are moving along on the lines which the International Association has developed, and are not ready to conform themselves at once to a higher ideal of substance and method in religious and moral instruction; while, on the other hand, about 25 per cent of the Sunday Schools of the country are seeking to adjust their work to this higher ideal by securing a better substance of instruction in accord with modern knowledge, and by using lessons constructed on modern educational principles." This has frequently been repeated.

I protest against that line of cleavage in the Sunday Schools as not in accordance with fact. It is impossible

<sup>1</sup> United States Commissioner W. T. Harris, in Search's *Ideal School*. See also Chap. I of this volume.

for me to know what percentage of the schools are or are not seeking a higher ideal of religious and moral instruction. But so far as my acquaintance extends, and so far as I can read the signs of the times, the great majority, especially of the leaders, are not "unready to conform themselves to a higher ideal," but are continually seeking the higher ideal of instruction in accordance with modern knowledge and modern educational principles.

The real line of cleavage is between those who believe the highest ideals can best be attained by the present modified International Lessons, and those who believe that they can be attained only by a different system of graded lessons.

**The defect of these new systems** is that they lay too large a proportion of emphasis on some of the needs of the Sunday School, and neglect some others that are necessary for its best results. It is like the present tendency of florists to develop the most exquisite beauty in roses at the expense of the old-time fragrance. Illustrations of this tendency are found in life, in business, in school and college curricula, in reforms of every kind.

**The Front Line System**, the ideal that is largely becoming real, combines the good in both. There is as real scientific pedagogy in the prevailing system as in the new one. And any new system that cannot say

"All the good the Old Time had  
Remains to make the New Time glad."

cannot have general success, and does not deserve to have it.

**Criticisms of the International System.** — For many years I have kept a file of the criticisms on the International

Lessons, as well as on Bible study in general, in order to see the subject from every point of view, and to discover the needs and the directions of real improvement.

Here are some specimens. "This plan of study has been deliberately stigmatized — stigmatized by prominent religious editors and by eminent clergymen and laymen — as 'scrappy,' as 'hash,' as a 'hop, skip, and jump series,' as a 'sparrow plan,' 'a grasshopper plan,' 'a kangaroo plan.'"

"The International Lesson System, consisting of seven or eight verses selected disconnectedly here and there in the Bible."

"The pestiferous practice in the Sunday School series of jumping all about from Galilee to Gibeon."

"Disconnected hodge-podge of facts and principles unworthy the name of Biblical learning." "Not orderly or connected in such a way as to afford a comprehensive and intelligible view of the Bible."

"Out of harmony with the principles of modern education."

It "pays little or no regard to fundamental and well-known pedagogical principles applied in all modern public instruction."

"Beginning anywhere and ending nowhere."

"The system is ungraded." "The distinctions of age and capacity in the scholars are not recognized in the present system. The same lesson is intended for infant, youth, and adult. This does violence to the law of natural progress and development."

One of its "most fatal defects . . . is the fact that it is framed, prepared, worked out, built up from the adult point of view *almost* entirely, if *not* entirely."

It "tends to limit the pupil's knowledge of the Bible by inviting a dependence upon the helps that accompany the lessons, and causing a neglect of Bible study."

"There are too many helps," and they are too good, for "not a single line is left uncovered (except, as another remarks, the difficult points which are passed by on the other side, as the man on the Jericho road by the Levite), nothing remains for individual research and study. It is simply a cramming process that dwarfs the mind and destroys the power of mental application."

By this system the Bible "has now been travelled over again, and again and again, through thirty years, until no nook or corner has been left unexplored."

"The old system is, in general, homiletic, and the new, educational. This does not mean that the one is exclusively homiletic and the other exclusively educational, for both are to a greater or less extent homiletic, and both are more or less educational. What it does mean is, that the one depends chiefly on homiletic methods to accomplish its purpose, and the other on educational methods."

"It has been used chiefly for devotional and hortatory purposes."

"Under such a system, progress in education is impossible — indeed, it is hardly too much to say that it is not even sought." The pupil after ten years of this system "knows very little about the Bible; its history and chronology, and the spiritual development of the people whose history it narrates, have not been, could not have been under the system, made intelligible."

"We are all feeling how antiquated, uninteresting, and ineffective present Sunday School instruction is."

We stand in the presence of this word-picture by a composite artist of high degree and dignity, supposed to know, and wonder where, in the present time, we can find the original. He must have been dead these many years.

I have taken my Diogenes lantern and have found imperfect systems and growing systems, but no system to which the above description belongs.

One morning years ago at Chautauqua, I heard an aged and learned Methodist minister, "who had a brilliant future behind him," discourse on Calvin and Calvinism. It was a fearful picture. The next morning Dr. Hodge of Princeton, who spells Calvinism with a very large C, began his lecture by saying, "If what the speaker yesterday described as Calvinism is Calvinism, then I am not a Calvinist." So I am inclined to say that if what has been repeated many times of late as a characterization of the International Lesson system is a true picture, then I have not been teaching the International Lessons these past years.

I never hear such statements about the International Lessons without recalling a story I once heard. A gentleman had the cheerful custom of saying about whatever happened to him, "It might have been worse." He lost his property; "It might have been worse." He was sick, he lost friends, he was disappointed in business, and always, "It might have been worse."

At length a friend thought he would make up a case where this favorite saying would be impossible. "I dreamed last night," he said, "that you and I and our entire families were out in a yacht when a cyclone struck us, and every one of us were drowned and went to eternal ruin."

Still the response was, "It might have been worse."

"Worse! really worse!!"

"Yes. *It might have been true.*"

**The International Lesson System.** — It is necessary first to possess a clear idea of what the International Lesson System is to-day; not as it was once, not as a mere theory, but as it is actually doing its work in the best present day Sunday Schools.

No brief sentence can set it out fully, without certain explanations such as are given below. For instance, the word "uniform" has misled many because they have applied it to the lessons taught, and not to the Scripture selections where it belonged.

*The International Lesson System is a system of uniform central selections of Scripture for the whole school, with optional or elective lessons at both ends.*

It may be represented thus: —

Uniform central selections for the whole school.



The phrase **central selections** is used because for many years the International Committee have plainly designated as part of each lesson a longer section of the Bible than the verses selected for printing and for more detailed study.

The *Optional Lessons* for the younger scholars at the beginning of the course have been endorsed and selected by the Committee for several years; but have been in use much longer by many schools, and have been practically a part of the system for a long time.

But wise parents, with children of different ages in the



Sunday School, have frequently felt that the disadvantages of some lessons less adapted to the youngest children were a far less evil than the separation of the younger members from the family Bible study, and its educational atmosphere.

The **elective courses** at the adult end of the system have long been in use in connection with the International Lessons. The Editors' Association and the International Lesson Committee are unanimously in favor of them. The Committee were unanimous several years ago, so were most of the editors. It is not wise to explain here why the Editors' Association at Clifton in 1903 did not vote on the question, and so were represented to the public as opposed. But that a great majority of them were then in favor of it is shown by the fact that at the next meeting at Richmond there was not a dissenting voice. Toronto in 1905 will interpret Denver, with a different result from the interpretation of its action by many at the time of its meeting.

Several denominations, believing in the International Lesson System, have also published elective courses for adult classes.

I have no question that it is better every way for the majority of adults to use the regular lessons of the rest of the school. Yet there is a continual need and call for special classes for the study of the Bible in other ways, and to take up practical religious questions. Some make a study of individual books of the Bible, of the historic method, doctrines of the church, Christian ethics, church history in the light of the Bible. In most of our large schools such classes are formed. It is said that 49 per cent of the pastor's classes among the Congregationalists take some such courses.

These classes are so various, their needs and desires are so manifold, that it may be wise to let the private experimentation go on a little longer, though there is no body of men in the country better fitted to prepare such courses than the select company of choice Sunday School men who compose the International Lesson Committee.

This plan of elective courses for adults leaves the committee free to confine themselves to the general movement of Bible history which is adapted to all ages above the early primary, and to the great majority of the busy men and women of our committees in city or in country.

**The International Lessons are graded in material as well as in treatment.**

The most urgent educational indictment of this system is what is called its failure to grade the material of the lessons to the different stages of the child's development.

The phrase "uniform selections" has been confounded with "uniform material."

That different material is found in the same passage is plain from the selections made in systems claimed to be peculiarly pedagogical. All but one of the professors of pedagogy I have met say that different material is found in the same passages.

The wider sections connected with the special selections (as arranged by the committee) enable us to find different material for different ages in the same section of Bible history. For instance, when we had printed a few verses from Amos, those who studied only those verses had reason to complain of their difficulty in teaching, but those who took the book of Amos, *as was designed*, found a story that would fire the enthusiasm of any junior boy.

In my mountain home not long ago I met four men from

the forestry department of the government, and each one found entirely different material in the same forest. One learned who owned each parcel, and went his way; another learned the various kinds of wood that made up the forest; another measured the trees and found the commercial value of the forest; and the fourth studied the botany of the forest.

When there is a comparison made with day school grading there is usually the error of not distinguishing between the different kinds of study in the different kinds of school. We are asked, "What would be said of the argument that, because it is possible to teach something about geometry to any pupil from five to twenty years of age, therefore geometry ought to be made in a given year or term the subject of study from the top to the bottom of our public school system?" I should say that to apply such an argument to the International Lesson study of the Bible was neither logic, nor pedagogy, nor science, nor fact. Professor Winchester is right when he says that most of the best literature in the world is not beyond the apprehension of a boy in his "teens." "He may not fully comprehend it. . . . As a rule, all the great epic writing, the literature of great action, based on broad and obvious motive, appeals to sympathies that are strong at an early age."<sup>1</sup> I have seen the truth illustrated over and over again among children.

So Oliver Wendell Holmes says: "You talk about reading Shakespeare, using him as an expression for the highest intellect, and you wonder that any common person should be so presumptuous as to suppose his thought can rise above the text which lies before him. But think a moment. A child's reading of Shakespeare is one thing,

<sup>1</sup>Address at the Religious Education Association meeting at Philadelphia.

and Coleridge's or Schlegel's reading of him is another. The saturation point of each mind differs from that of every other."<sup>1</sup>

The Bible is literature, and history, and story, and biography, and the kind of grading for these studies is entirely different from the grading for mathematics or languages.

Moreover, there are no day schools beyond the Kindergarten age where nothing is taught but stories for one age, and history for another, and biography for another. And there are no boys and girls existing for whom these alone are the best or most natural material for their entire studies.

Again, it is simply a fact that there are many schools really graded in the International Lessons according to material as well as treatment. This grading has been becoming more and more perfect through the discussions that have been going on, and the examples set, and the scientific study of the child and of the art of teaching.

There are still imperfections in details, perhaps some of them necessary, but these are far more than overbalanced by the advantages of the general system.

**Again, the International Lessons are an orderly, connected scheme of lessons.** Through each Testament it moves consecutively according to the order of the history as given in the Bible, with the Prophets and Epistles set in their places in the history.

The movement does not, and never did, consist of seven or eight verses selected disconnectedly here and there in the Bible, but *sections of the history* joined in consecutive

<sup>1</sup> *Autocrat of the Breakfast Table*, p. 133.

order, just as one travels through a country, not by stopping at every interesting village, but by making great cities and noble natural scenes the centres of a whole region. Thus it moves through the Bible once in six years. This method gives a better general knowledge of the Bible than any other scheme yet presented. It is more connected and less "hop, skip, and jump" than other schemes.

It is a very curious objection that the International Lessons have been going over the Bible every six or seven years for thirty years. How else can the young get a full knowledge of the Bible at all? I pity the Christian that does not read his Bible through as often as once in six years. And as to its being monotonous, those of us who have gone over it many times find it more radiant each time, revealing new aspects, setting out the truths in fuller light,—the last time far better than the first.

**The Advantages of the International System.**—Professor Sanders in his president's address before the Religious Education Association, and Professors Burton and Mathews in *Principles and Ideals for the Sunday School*, have very frankly and fairly stated these advantages. But I wish to recall, to emphasize, and to add to their presentation.

1. Nearly all the advantages claimed for other systems are equally adapted to the International system. I have before me a small volume presenting a new graded system and a pamphlet presenting the most popular of the systems which claim to be graded according to pedagogical principles, and there is scarcely one of their principles which cannot be adapted to the uniform system as described above.

The International system is a flexible system and a live system, and in its desire to grow into "the stature of a perfect man in Christ Jesus," absorbs good from every source. "Whatever lion eats becomes lion." Epictetus says that sheep eat grass, but it is wool that grows on their backs. I am delighted to acknowledge my personal indebtedness to other systems.

It is easy to prove the superiority of one system by comparing its possibilities with what is actually put in practice by another, or the best use of one by the worst use of another. But time and use decide in the end. Most methods can be adapted to any scheme of lessons.

Take, for instance, the seven "next steps forward" named at the first meeting of the Religious Education Association (see p. 183); and "the Characteristics of the Best Lesson Systems," from Dr. Smith's book:—

(a) *Subject-Graded*, i.e. the Right Subject at the right stage of the child's Mental Development.

(b) *Source or Heuristic Method*. Actual, tangible use of Bible, Prayer Book, History, etc., as the Source of Knowledge.

(c) *Written Home Work and Home Study*.

(d) *New Material in Class Work and New Points-of-View in Reviewing Home Work*.

(e) *An Intimate Knowledge of Bible Geography*. (Physical and Historical.)

(f) *Abundant Use of Pictures and Religious Art*.

(g) *Use of "Means of Expression."* Hand Work, Maps, Modelling, Written Work, Picture Scrap Books, Model-Making, etc.

(h) *Wise Correlation with Secular Subjects and Day School Knowledge*.

(i) *Thoroughly Churchly* and Doctrinally sound and definite.

2. The International system beyond all others favors Bible study in the home. The lessons and daily readings are used at family prayers. The parents are prepared to answer questions of children in different grades. The subjects and characters are discussed together, instead of mothers having to study several different lessons as I know mothers to do.

3. No other system gives such unity to the school itself, — in its devotional atmosphere, in its reviews, in its general exercises, in its use of pictures, stereopticons, in obtaining prepared teachers in emergencies.

4. Under no other system can so much be done for training and preparing teachers, by teachers' meetings for the school, by union teachers' classes for a whole town or city, under the most expert teachers, by a comparison of views as teachers meet incidentally, by public lectures and normal classes under expert Bible scholars and teachers, which can be immediately put into practice.

5. Under no other system is it possible to have so much of the power which comes from a magnificent unity and concentration of religious forces, uniting nearly all denominations, impressing the whole community with its power, interacting for mutual improvement. Rev. Dr. William Walter Smith, Secretary of the Sunday School Commission, Diocese of New York, writes thus in his excellent book on Sunday School Teaching: —

“There are over two hundred various Text Books and Systems now being used in the Episcopal Church alone. There are forty in one Diocese. There is no likelihood that a child going from one School to another will have a

similar system or grading. Every change of Assistant Minister or of Superintendents means a new experimentation in lessons. Confusion and despair reign supreme in the Sunday School world. 'This ought not so to be.' No local movements for Sunday School Betterment can accomplish much without coöperation, federation, and extra-parochial interest."

This is equally true of the Sunday School world as a whole. The power of this unity is nobly illustrated by the Christian Endeavor movement, which has multiplied the power and usefulness of the young people's meetings and work a hundredfold over the old plan of separate independent meetings in each church, insomuch that it has distinctly changed the religious atmosphere of the whole country.

6. No other system can provide such good helps for the teacher and the scholar. The great number of persons employed brings out the best by natural selection. The greatness of the competition urges every one interested to do his very best, lest he be left behind in the race. The immense number of helps published reduces the price to the very lowest terms. "The good" may sometimes be "the enemy of the best," but more often it is the means of making the best better.

It is said that there are too many helps, just as there are too many books. But there are seventeen millions of people to use them. No one need use any more of them than he desires; and he gains the opportunity of selecting the ones he can use to most advantage.

The helps in no way prevent research, but are a continual inspiration to further research. Leigh Hunt named one of his books *The Indicator*, from the bird which indi-



cates to the honey-hunters where the bees have laid up their treasures. The lesson helps are indicators pointing out the treasures in God's Word, sweeter than honey and richer than fine gold.

There are very few teachers who can possess all the needful books for complete research on the whole Bible, and fewer still have time to use them to advantage. They no more "cram" than all books, sermons, or lectures cram. A reviewer in a late *Outlook* truly says, "A good illustration borrowed is better than a poor illustration which is, or is thought to be, original." For the great majority of teachers the choice lies between poor teaching with imperfect or meagre helps and good teaching with the best and most suggestive helps available. For good helps are not a well, but a fountain; and not merely a fountain, but one like that of the Oriental legend, each drop from which opened a new fountain from the sands on which it fell.

Thus the true use of helps is:—

To furnish the facts.

To teach them correctly.

To show them from all sides.

To enable us to digest them and make them our own.

To awaken thought.

To suggest new truths.

To suggest new applications of old truths.

To suggest methods of teaching.

To give inspiration and interest in the subject.

7. In conclusion, no system has yet exhausted its possibilities. I rejoice with all my heart in the new awakening and in all that is being done in every direction. Which-

ever one succeeds best will embody the most of the principles which are necessary to the best Sunday School work.

No system can work the miracle of the religious education of the young through sessions of one hour a week. The Sunday School must be supplemented by pastors' classes and normal classes at other times and by supplemental lessons and longer study hours.

But the best way toward improvement is through putting the various theories into practice, and determining what is really best by actual experiment. In the words of Rev. John L. Keedy, in the July *Biblical World*: "For myself, I do not believe that any curriculum, however well graded, or any courses of study, however well prepared, by any group of men with a scholarly knowledge of the Bible and with a theoretical knowledge of our Sunday Schools, will meet the needs as well as those which are the outgrowth of experiment and experience. While I am sure a graded course well chosen and well wrought out would meet a real need and be a great gain, yet I am quite as certain that nothing can so surely solve the problem as an interested and competent teacher who works out his own course and communicates his own interested and eager spirit to his pupils. If by all of our addresses and discussions and committees and inquiries we disseminate knowledge about material and method, and impart the spirit of eagerness to superintendents and teachers, we have furnished that which the Sunday School situation most needs."

## VII

### SUNDAY SCHOOL IGNORANCE OF THE BIBLE, AND ITS REMEDY

THAT there is a most lamentable ignorance of many things in the Bible on the part of many of the children and youth of to-day, as well as of their elders, is frequently stated by persons who ought to know what the facts are. Says the *Journal and Messenger*, "It comes from various sources that the boys and girls of to-day are amazingly ignorant of the Bible." Rev. J. T. Briscoe began an address at a Sunday School convention in England thus: "The Sunday School system to-day is crucified between two thieves — sacerdotalism on the one hand, and secularism on the other, and of the two the sacerdotalist is likely to prove the impenitent malefactor." We all know instances of this Bible ignorance, and deplore it. It is exploited in many addresses, and many tests are made, and the sad results are reported on the principle stated by Mr. Ruskin in his *Seven Lamps of Architecture*: "There is a crust about the impressible part of men's minds which must be pierced through before they can be touched to the quick; and though we may prick at it, and scratch at it in a thousand separate places, we might as well have let it alone if we do not come through somewhere with a deep thrust; . . . it need not be even so wide as

a church door, so that it be enough." The facts reported do make a deep thrust through the crust of indifference as to what our children are learning and gaining in the Sunday School, enough to startle into wakefulness "the seven sleepers of Ephesus." It is interesting and profitable for us to study some of these tests, as they not only impress us with the need of removing the ignorance, but are themselves a means for doing it.

President Thwing, of Western Reserve University, at the first Bible exercise of the freshman class of 1894-1895, gave a test to thirty-four young men, all but one of whom was connected with some one of nine religious congregations in the Central States. He wrote out on the black-board twenty-two quotations from the writings of the most noted English-speaking poet of the present century, Alfred Tennyson, with whose writings all educated persons are more or less familiar. These twenty-two extracts all contained references or allusions to the Holy Scriptures, and were as follows: —

"My sin was a thorn  
Among the thorns that girt Thy brow."  
— *Supposed Confessions.*

"As manna on my wilderness." — *Ibid.*

"That God would move,  
And strike the hard, hard rock, and thence,  
Sweet in their utmost bitterness,  
Would issue tears of penitence." — *Ibid.*

"Like that strange angel which of old,  
Until the breaking of the light,  
Wrestled with wandering Israel." — *To —*.

"Like Hezekiah's, backward runs  
The shadow of my days." — *Will Waterproof.*

“Joshua’s moon in Ajalon.” — *Locksley Hall*.

“A heart as rough as Esau’s hand.” — *Godiva*.

“Gash thyself, priest, and honor thy brute Baal.” — *Aylmer’s Field*.

“Ruth amid the fields of corn.” — *Ibid.*

“Pharaoh’s darkness.” — *Ibid.*

“A Jonah’s gourd,  
Up in one night and due to sudden sun.” — *The Princess*.

“Stiff as Lot’s wife.” — *Ibid.*

“Arimathæan Joseph.” — *The Holy Grail*.

“For I have flung thee pearls and find thee swine.”  
— *The Last Tournament*.

“Perhaps, like him of Cana in Holy Writ,  
Our Arthur kept his best until the last.” — *The Holy Grail*.

“And marked me even as Cain.” — *Queen Mary*.

“The Church on Peter’s rock.” — *Ibid.*

“Let her eat dust like the serpent, and be driven out of her Paradise.”  
— *Becket*.

“A whole Peter’s sheet.” — *Ibid.*

“The godless Jephtha vows his child. . . .  
To one cast of the dice.” — *The Flight*.

“A Jacob’s ladder falls.” — *Early Spring*.

“Follow Light and do the Right—for man can half control his  
doom—

Till you find the deathless Angel seated in the vacant tomb.”  
— *Locksley Hall, Sixty Years After*.

It is to be noticed that the allusions contained in these extracts are not at all recondite.

The President published the record of the answers, as follows: Of the 34 students 9 failed to understand the quotation,

“My sin was as a thorn  
Among the thorns that girt Thy brow.”

11 failed to apprehend the “manna on my wilderness.”

16 were likewise ignorant of the significance of “striking the rock.”

16 also knew nothing about the “wrestling of Jacob and the angel.”

32 had never heard of “the shadow turning back on the dial for Hezekiah’s lengthening life.”

26 were ignorant of “Joshua’s moon.”

19 failed to indicate “the peculiar condition of Esau’s hand.”

22 were unable to explain “the allusion to Baal.”

19 had apparently never read “the idyl of Ruth and Boaz.”

18 failed to indicate the meaning of “Pharaoh’s darkness.”

28 were laid low by the question about “Jonah’s gourd.”

9, and 9 only, were unable to explain the allusion to “Lot’s wife.”

23 did not understand who was meant by “Arimathæan Joseph.”

22 also had not read the words of Christ sufficiently to explain “For I have flung thee pearls and find thee swine.”

24 had apparently not so read the account of “Christ’s first miracle” as to be able to explain the reference.

11 did not understand “the mark which Cain bore.”

25 were as ignorant as a heathen of "the foundation of the Church on Peter."

12, and 12 only, had not gathered up knowledge sufficient to indicate certain truths about "the serpent in Eden."

27 were paralyzed by the allusion, "A whole Peter's sheet."

24 were unable to write anything as to "Jephtha's vow."

11 only, however, were struck dumb by the allusion to "Jacob's ladder."

But 16 were able to write a proper explanation of "the deathless angel seated in the vacant tomb."

In a word, to each of these 34 men 22 questions were put which would demand 748 answers. The record shows that out of a possible 748 correct answers, only 328 were given; not quite 44 per cent.

These quotations were given to a senior class of 38 negro and Indian students at Hampton, Virginia, none of whom could enter college without three years' further study. Of the 836 possible answers, 645 were given correctly, or 77 per cent. One student answered all the questions; three, all but one.<sup>1</sup>

Dr. George A. Coe, the well-known Professor of Philosophy in the Northwestern University, in order to test the Bible knowledge of his students, seized the opportunity "to put a few simple queries about the Bible to nearly one hundred college students. Most of these persons, no doubt, were brought up in Christian homes and had enjoyed such instruction as the average Sunday School or pulpit of our day affords." The questions were:—

<sup>1</sup> See *Century Magazine* for December, 1900.

1. What is the Pentateuch?
2. What is the Higher Criticism of the Scriptures?
3. Does the Book of Jude belong to the Old Testament or to the New?
4. Name one of the Patriarchs of the Old Testament.
5. Name one of the Judges of the Old Testament.
6. Name three of the Kings of Israel.
7. Name three Prophets.
8. Give one of the Beatitudes.
9. Quote a verse from the letter to the Romans.

Ninety-six papers were returned.

|                          |                         |
|--------------------------|-------------------------|
| 8 answered correctly all | 12 answered correctly 4 |
| 13 answered correctly 8  | 11 answered correctly 3 |
| 11 answered correctly 7  | 13 answered correctly 2 |
| 5 answered correctly 6   | 11 answered correctly 1 |
| 9 answered correctly 5   | 3 answered correctly 0  |

The number out of 96 giving the correct answer to the first question was 60; to the second, 16; to the third, 56; to the fourth, 61; to the fifth, 45; to the sixth, 47; to the seventh, 52; to the eighth, 76; to the ninth, 31.

As the number of papers was approximately 100, these figures may substantially be taken as percentages. The total number of correct answers was 444, out of 864, or nearly 52 per cent, a little more than half.

Dr. Schauffler of New York on reading this statement was "filled with wonder at the crass ignorance of so many college students." It occurred to him "to try the same set of questions in a large young women's Bible class in Olivet Sunday School, the conditions of examination being exactly the same as those for the Northwestern University



students." In his *Pastoral Leadership of Sunday School Forces* he gives the results. They are as follows: —

| QUESTION.  | NORTHWESTERN UNIVERSITY. | OLIVET.             |
|--|--------------------------|---------------------|
|  | Correctly answered.      | Correctly answered. |
| What is the Pentateuch? . . . . .  | 62+ %                    | 80 %                |
| What is the Higher Criticism of the Scriptures? . . . . .                  | 16.6                     | 0                   |
| Does the Book of Jude belong to the Old Testament or to the New? . . . . . | 58+                      | 80                  |
| Name one of the Patriarchs of the Old Testament. . . . .                   | 63.5                     | 70                  |
| Name one of the Judges of the Old Testament                                | 47-                      | 60                  |
| Name three of the Kings of Israel . . . .                                  | 49-                      | 100                 |
| Name three Prophets . . . . .  | 54+                      | 100                 |
| Give one of the Beatitudes . . . . .                                       | 80                       | 90                  |
| Quote a verse from the letter to the Romans                                | 32.5                     | 70                  |
| Percentage correctly answered . . . .                                      | 51.4                     | 72                  |

“Professor Coe gives some strange facts with regard to blunders made by his students. As for example, among the judges were named Solomon, Jeremiah, and Leviticus; among the prophets were Matthew, Luke, and John; Herod and Ananias appeared as kings of Israel; Nebuchadnezzar figured both as judge and king of Israel; the Pentateuch was confused with the Gospels and in one case with ‘the seven Gospels.’ Among the Beatitudes were the following: ‘Blessed are the poor in heart, for they shall see God;’ ‘Blessed are the law-givers;’ ‘Blessed are the hungry, for they shall be fed.’”

It should be noted that questions 2 and 9 are very diffi-

cult for young people, or even for educated people who have not a very good memory. At the Congregational Superintendents' Union in Boston the following statement was made by Mr. Southworth, the head-master of a city school, and afterwards superintendent of schools in the city, and a superintendent of a Sunday School : —

“Do you think,” said he, “that the essentials of Bible knowledge are taught in our Sunday Schools? Let me give you a bit of my experience. I asked a large number of Sunday School scholars from 15 to 17 years old to write for me a little life of Christ, just as I might have asked them, had they been public school scholars, to write a life of Washington or Lincoln. Here are some paragraphs taken from the compositions I received in response to that request :—

“‘There were no years before Christ, therefore he was born in the year 1.’

“‘Jesus was the father of Christ. He was born in Jerusalem in the year 1.’

“‘Jesus was born in an old barn of Jerusalem.’

“‘Christ was born of the Virgin Mary. His parents were very old.’

“‘Christ went to work when 31 years old, in the same field with his father. After a while he began to teach the Bible and made the Ten Commandments on a mount.’”

Such answers can be multiplied to almost any extent. A young man objected to the Bible as inaccurate because, as he said : —

“In one of the Gospels we are told that Joseph was the husband of Mary, while we are carefully informed elsewhere that he married the daughter of Potiphara, the priest of On. I don't want to pin my faith to any of the statements of such a book.”

Another could not believe that the children of Israel carried Noah's ark forty years through the wilderness. And again, here is a literal copy from Miss Graham of what one pupil wrote : —

“Esau was a man who wrote fables and sold the copyright to a publisher for a bottle of potash.”

It looks more like a joke made on purpose.

Our first inquiry should be, How much do these things signify? What value shall we put upon them as tests of the work done in school?

1. I have made a good many tests and experiments, and the average results in every case are better than those given. A large number of Sunday Schools in Newton, Massachusetts, took an examination, unannounced beforehand, on the Life of Christ, and the percentage of right answers was at least 75 per cent (I have not the exact figures now). Several times in our own school we have given tests on the Life of Christ like the one which Mr. Southworth used and always with results much better than he claimed.

In the *Outlook* some years ago a lady wrote her experience with a class of girls twelve years of age, in which was included the daughters of the minister and deacons. She asked them, Who was Moses, and then other Old Testament characters, and not one of them knew the answers, except to “Who was the first man?” the most disputed of all. Frequently, after that, in visiting Sunday Schools, I selected a class of about the age she tested, and with the permission of the teacher to whom I told the above experience, asked the scholars, Who was Moses? I said the form of the question was very bad, for no one could know which of a dozen answers was desired, and I explained what I wanted, but gave no clew. Nearly every scholar in each class knew something about Moses. Then I asked them, Who was George Washington? and with the exception of a class of boys who had just been study-

ing United States history, I did not find one who did not know as much about Moses as about Washington.

At the close of the study of the Life of Christ this year (1904) I gave for the *Review*, in my Select Notes and in the Quarterlies, a test similar to that of President Thwing, consisting of references in literature to events in the Gospels we had been studying. I have heard so many expressions of interest in the plan that I give the references for the benefit of any who may wish to test their scholars or themselves. I asked teachers to send me a report, and the results as collated by my assistant are, that of 89 persons reported, 28 answered all the references correctly, and of the 2444 questions answered 74 per cent were correct.

TENNYSON.

1. "My sin was a thorn  
Among the thorns that girt Thy brow."  
— *Supposed Confessions*.
2. "Arimathæan Joseph."— *The Holy Grail*.
3. "For I have flung thee pearls and find thee swine."  
— *The Last Tournament*.
4. "Perhaps, like him of Cana in Holy Writ,  
Our Arthur kept his best until the last."  
— *The Holy Grail*.
5. "The church on Peter's rock."— *Queen Mary*.
6. "Follow Light and do the Right— for man can half control his  
doom—  
Till you find the deathless Angel seated in the vacant tomb."  
— *Locksley Hall, Sixty Years After*.

WHITTIER.

7. "Whispering, by its open door:  
'Fear not! He hath gone before.'"— *My Dream*.

8. "Whate'er hath touched his garment's hem."  
— *World's Convention.*

9. "And broke with publicans the bread of shame." — *The Gallows.*

10. "He who cooled the furnace and smoothed the stormy wave."  
— *Cassandra Southwick.*

11. " 'Cast thyself down,' the tempter saith,  
 'And angels shall thy feet upbear.' " — *The Answer.*

12. "But where are the sisters who hastened to greet  
The lowly Redeemer, and sit at his feet." — *Palestine.*

13. "O Thou! at whose rebuke the grave  
Back to warm life the sleeper gave."  
— *The Human Sacrifice.*

14. "When 'get thee behind me, Satan' was the language of my  
heart." — *Cassandra Southwick.*

15. "And the voice that breathed peace to the waves of the sea."  
— *Palestine.*

SHAKESPEARE.

16. "Though some of you, with Pilate, wash your hands."  
— *Richard II.*

D. M. MULOCK CRAIK.

17. "Only, — O God, O God, to cry for bread,  
And get a stone!" — *Only a Woman.*

LONGFELLOW.

18. "And each face did shine like the Holy One's face at Mt. Tabor."  
— *Children of the Lord's Supper.*

RUSKIN.

19. "The house unroofed by faith." — *Stones of Venice.*

20. "Our Father's business." — *Ethics of the Dust.*

MILTON.

21. "The Pilot of the Galilean Lake." — *Lycidas.*

BROWNING.

22. "Who went and danced, and got men's heads cut off."  
— *Fra Lippo Lippi.*

MRS. BROWNING.

23. "The star is lost in the dark ;  
The manger is lost in the straw." — *Christmas Gifts.*
24. "Come forth, tread out through the dark and drear,  
Since he who walks on the sea is here."  
— *View across the Roman Campagna.*
25. "Gripping the Bag of the traitor Dead." — *Ibid.*
26. "Couldst thou not watch one hour?" — *Casa Guidi Windows.*
27. "It went up single, echoless, 'My God, I am forsaken.'"  
— *Couper's Grave.*

THACKERAY.

28. "Who bade the mud from Dives' wheel,  
To spurn the rags of Lazarus." — *The end of the Play.*

JANE TAYLOR.

29. "The torn scrap of a leaf,  
Containing the prayer of the penitent thief."  
— *The Philosopher's Scales.*
30. "Yet not mountains of silver and gold could suffice  
One pearl to outweigh,—'twas the pearl of great price." — *Ibid.*

2. In order to estimate the value to be put on such tests, it should be noted that every case of ignorance in the Sunday School can be matched and more than matched in the day schools on the subjects taught there. For years I have kept two large envelopes, one labelled Sunday School Ignorance, and the other Day School Ignorance.

Dr. Schauffler says that in some examination papers presented to him as showing Sunday School ignorance, there were more failures in the things, like spelling and grammar, which belong to Day School ignorance. Just the other day the head of a department in a Brooklyn High School complained bitterly of the Grammar Schools

that the scholars from them did not know how to spell, nor even know the alphabet so as to be able to look up words in the dictionary.

“Complaint is heard on the New York side of the river, among merchants and other business men, that boys sent out from the city schools come to the store and the shop densely ignorant in the commonest branches of learning; that often they cannot write a simple letter without atrocious blunders in grammar and spelling, and are unable to cast up a column of figures correctly.”

Here is a report from a professor of English at Williams College. “Recently, finding that his elective classes knew little about the best-known writers in English literature, he addressed a series of questions to a class of forty sophomores. These students may be assumed fairly to represent the average acquirements of college undergraduates at that stage. Out of the forty, ten were unable to mention six plays by Shakespeare; fourteen did not know who wrote *In Memoriam*; twenty-two had never heard of Sam Weller; twenty-three could not tell who wrote *The Mill on the Floss*; twenty-six could not mention a work by Ruskin; thirty-four could not tell who Falstaff was, and thirty-five could not mention a single poem by either Wordsworth or Browning.”

A writer in a late number of the *Outlook* reports some conversations with boys ranging in age from ten to fifteen years, and also with some voters, all educated in the public schools of New York City. They did not know the meaning of common things reported in the newspapers, as municipal, municipality, the President’s cabinet, ambassador, federal. Their answers were some of them very curious.

Mr. Cleveland and other eminent politicians will be surprised to hear that the Philippines "are islands of fugitive savages, most of whom are democrats and cannibals."

Whole books have been written exploiting these blunders.

Before we undertake to estimate the meaning and bearing of these facts on both day school and Sunday School, let us go on a little farther in our search for facts.

3. It is well to remember that very few adults, even educated men, — men of talent, and power, and usefulness, — can remember definite facts, or quote word for word. "A London paper says that barristers hold that the proportion of persons who can state a fact or quote a conversation with complete correctness is about one in a thousand, and concludes an article with the assertion that 'Man is not a text-quoting animal.'"

I have before me statements concerning Harvard professors and even President Roosevelt, who misquoted Scripture. It is related that in setting up a plea of self-defence in a murder case Gen. B. F. Butler quoted from Satan's words in Job, saying, "We have it on the *highest authority* that all that a man hath will he give for his life."

The Evangelist Munhall used frequently in his addresses to offer a finely bound Bible to any one present who would repeat correctly twelve verses from twelve different books of the Bible, and state the chapter and verse. I was told that he had never found a person who could do it. The only time I ever met him was in Paris in 1894, and I asked him if this was true. He said that he had lately found one colored boy who could do it, but never any other. I have tried the experiment with educated persons familiar with the Bible, and I have never yet found a person who could stand that simple test.



A few years ago while making a Sunday School tour through the principal cities of Ohio, I said to a very intelligent man in the hotel dining room : " I do not believe that one-quarter of the people in this room can tell how many states there are in the Union. He was sure he could, and he named forty-two states and ten territories. As we were leaving we noticed in the morning paper a statement that the government were questioning how to arrange the forty-three stars on the flag ; and the evening paper of the same day at Toledo stated that it was finally decided how to arrange the forty-four stars.

Only a day or two ago, desiring to be certain before I wrote it down, I asked a number of people in an unusually intelligent company, whether there had been fifteen or sixteen amendments to the Constitution of the United States. There was no certainty in the answers till I came to some teachers, one of whom, a teacher of history, confirmed their statement by the history. How many of you can tell which is the right number, or how many states there are in the Union ?

It has been said that no college president could pass the entrance examination to his own college, though he really knows a thousand times as much as those who can pass.

4. It is hardly fair to judge of the results of any system of instruction by its poorer scholars, or of a fruit tree by its wormy fruit. We know that a marvellous amount of good education is obtained in many directions in spite of imperfection in other directions. It will be seen from these examples that memory tests are not in any case a complete test of knowledge of any subject, much less of the knowledge of the details of the Bible, which it takes several years to go over in one half hour once a week.

Who is so educated that he does not have to turn continually to reference books and dictionaries? I keep a number always at hand so that when persecuted in one dictionary I can flee to another.

Then in most school examinations, these follow close upon the study of the subjects, the colleges giving preliminary examinations for this purpose.

We must always consider, in the results, the fact that many persons may know the fact, while ignorant of terms familiar to us expressing those facts. For instance, in a late examination paper, or rather test paper, in our Sunday School, one of the questions was, Name the four evangelists. One of the scholars came to me and asked who were meant by "evangelists," he never having heard the term. Speaking of this to a college student who has been brought up all his life in a Bible atmosphere, he declared that he did not recognize the term as referring to the Bible. But he knew who were the authors of the four Gospels. One might know the whole Bible by heart and not know how to define the Higher Criticism.

"Mr. John Tetlow, of the Girls' High School in Boston, whose name carries as much weight as that of any one educator engaged in fitting girls for college, last year wrote a letter to the *Boston Transcript*, stating his experience with a Harvard examination paper for which an hour was allowed. Mr. Tetlow took fifty-six minutes to write the paper, so he had only four minutes to look it over. On re-reading it at leisure the next day, he felt that he should be ashamed to have his spelling, punctuation, or rhetoric judged by it."

It is reported that a martinet school teacher, after hearing a sermon by Henry Ward Beecher, went to him with

gratitude for his teaching and preaching power, but also said, "Why, Mr. Beecher, I counted eighty-three grammatical mistakes in your sermon this morning." "Is that all?" replied Mr. Beecher, "I'll bet you there were a hundred."

One of the most brilliant professors in Boston said to me that when he saw the stenographic report of one of his extempore addresses, he tore it up in disgust and wrote out what he wanted to say.

I never was more surprised in my life than the first time I saw one of my extempore addresses reported verbatim.

Once more the memory tests are no test of the main results at which the Sunday School is aiming. The spiritual and character results are largely, not entirely, independent of the exact memory of details.

In the charming illustrated book, *The Holy Land*, by Fulleylove and Kelman, the author writes: "In Syria . . . the most skilful dragoman cannot understand a map, nor guide you to your destination by geographical directions. . . . On unknown ground a Syrian is of little use as a guide. . . . He finds his way partly . . . by the habit of noticing minute features of the road which entirely escape the ordinary observer. A story is told of a thief in a certain town in Palestine who entered a house and stole nothing. He simply went out and claimed the house before the judge. When the case came to trial, the thief challenged the owner to tell how many steps there were in the stair, how many panes of glass in the windows, and a long catalogue of other such details. This the owner could not do, and when the thief gave the numbers correctly, the house was at once given to him as its obvious owner," although the real owner had lived there all his life.

A man may live all his life in the Gospel spirit, obeying its precepts, at home in its teachings, and yet be unable to tell how many chapters or verses there are, or how many miracles they record, and many other details.

At a convention some one said that in our Sunday School we failed to teach the commandments and Bible facts to the children, while in the Episcopal and Catholic schools all the children knew them. The following Sunday I went into a Sunday School and when asked to speak I requested permission to ask some questions. "How many of you know the Ten Commandments?" About one-fourth held up their hands. But, I said, I do not mean how many can say them word for word, but how many can tell what is the first commandment, or the third, or the fifth, etc. Three-fourths of the school held up their hands. But the minister and the superintendent came to me to explain why they had not held up their hands. I had not expected them to, of course. But they said that they had learned the Ten Commandments out of the Bible, and they were not numbered there. They knew the commandments and kept them, without knowing them by number.

Thousands live the commandments who cannot repeat them word for word. Many gain power from literature who do not know much of what is taught in the schools concerning the books and their authors.

Now, I am not saying these things to excuse ignorance of ordinary Bible facts, for I believe it is important to know them, and that they are a real help to knowing, remembering, understanding, and living the great spiritual and character-forming truths of the Bible.

It is the edge of the axe that does the cutting, and is

the most important thing about the axe ; but the heavy iron back of the edge multiplies its cutting power. All Bible knowledge, especially an accurate knowledge of its main facts, are essential to the best character-forming work of the Sunday School.

There are several things which can greatly diminish the amount of Sunday School ignorance of the Bible, all of them simple and easily possible.

1. The right kind of Reviews, in which the main facts of the quarter's lessons are clearly set forth and drilled into the memory.

2. The right kind of supplemental lessons can do for the Intermediate classes what is done to some extent now in the Primary grade. They must largely consist of questions with definite answers, covering the points most needed to be known, and in which failures are most often shown.

3. But the greatest means is the daily reading of the Bible at home. A part of the time the whole Bible in course. At the door of neglect of daily Bible reading lies the chief cause of the ignorance of the Bible, so often charged to the account of the Sunday School.

“Of about forty students in the freshman class in a certain college, six of whom were ministers' sons, the president found that not *one* had *read the Bible through*; only five had read the New Testament, one had read the Bible as far as Proverbs, few had read through the books of Moses, all were ignorant of the Prophets, and not one could give the names of the books of the Bible. And these were educated young men, fitted for college.” In making tests on this point I have found a larger proportion

of adults than of young people who have read the whole Bible.

The Young People's societies are doing much, but the Sunday School teachers can do still more by persuading their scholars to daily home study and home reading of the Bible. And the parents can do most of all.

## VIII

### SIGNS OF GROWING INTEREST IN BIBLE STUDY EXPRESSED IN ORGANIZATIONS FOR THAT PURPOSE

ARTHUR HELPS, in his *Friends in Council*, makes the wise man of affairs say that the prophet whose range of vision is narrowed to a few years is apt to be a pessimist, while he whose vision sweeps over centuries is full of joy and hope. So he who sees only certain phases or forms of Bible study, under certain conditions, in certain localities, in some narrow vista of the years, is apt to abide in that discouraged condition best expressed by the words in which Emerson is said to have characterized his visit to Ruskin, "Solid gloom."

But a larger vision, a longer period for comparison, a wider range of methods and forms of study, a broader extent of territory, will change the whole aspect of the spiritual landscape. The "seven fears" will be changed into "seven joys," as, to the king in the *Light of Asia*, the old flag rent by the blast was but the rending of false superstitions, the flinging away of the gems like a shower was but the scattering of precious truths to the people, the ten elephants that shook the earth with their tread were the ten great gifts of wisdom, and the drum that pealed like a thunderstorm was but the sound of the preached word "heard round the world."

I. Let us first take a glimpse at the growth of Bible study in the Sunday School as the leading Bible study

department of the Church. One does not need to listen very intently to hear a dirge in a minor key to which is set such monotonous refrains as : —

“The decadence of the Sunday School.”

“Dying at the top.”

“Sunday School ignorance of the Bible.”

“The decline in numbers.”

“The Sunday School failure.”

“The Christian Endeavor waning.”

Men of wisdom and science see these things, for they are there to be seen ; and we ought to see them till they

“Stir a fever in the blood of age

And make the infant sinew strong as steel.”

But such views are for the most part partial and local and narrow. No cause ever triumphed when its soldiers marched to dirges, but only when they were inspired and stirred to the very depths by songs of courage and hope. Of all the Psalms there is but one that has not in it the note of hope of better things. There is not one of the prophets, however earnest in his warnings, and terrible in his pictures of the fruit of sin, but has also bright visions of the good time coming. The glory of the Greeks waned, for its age of gold was in the far past. Prophets and Gospels are succeeding, for their age of gold is always before them.

The very abundance of the criticisms is a sign of the value and power of the Sunday School. It is the blooded horse, not the worn-out hack, which is padded and patched and spurred on to a faster gait. It is the good man whom the preachers most berate for not doing better. It is the best fruit tree that is most trimmed and scraped.



There has never been an International Triennial Convention which has not shown a large increase in the Sunday School membership, even without adding the 325,000 in the Home Department. The fourteen millions in the Sunday Schools represent one-sixth of the whole population. Dr. Mead, in his excellent *Modern Methods in Sunday School Work*, says that "Thirteen millions of children and youth in our country never cross the threshold of a Bible school, either Protestant or Roman Catholic." How can this be when, according to the United States census of 1900, the total population attending day schools is only 13,367,147, and the total population of school age, 5 to 17 years, including Negroes, Indians, and Mongolians, is only 21,538,024.

Some time ago General Butler, when he was candidate for the governorship of Massachusetts, and was showing the need of reforming our day school system, stated that there were in the state 104,206 persons who could not read and write. But a look at the government statistics showed that 93,272 of these were born in foreign countries, 6934 were natives of other states, and only 2486 were natives of this state and brought up under its school system.

One is continually tempted to repeat Edward Everett Hale's famous *bon mot*, "Positive, 'lie'; comparative, 'liar'; superlative, 'statistics.'" I have never yet known an accurate census taken in any city or town which did not present a better showing than had been claimed. Most Sunday School statistics, especially those given at the Triennial International Conventions, are remarkably accurate on the positive side for Evangelical schools, but they do not include the Roman Catholics and several other denominations. Hence the inferences that many draw

from them are very far from the actual facts, for by merely subtracting the given Sunday School figures from the figures of the United States census, they count as unreached all the infirm and the sick, all who have been to Sunday School some part of the 12 years between 5 and 17 but are not in the schools at the time the census was taken, and all members of Roman Catholic and some other schools. It is to be hoped that hereafter the whole Sunday School population will be included in the statistics, because so many make the facts appear much worse than they are by using the International statistics as if they were inclusive of all.

In connection with the Sabbath School there has been a marvellous increase in the number of Bibles used. The annual sale was never so great. The two Bible societies, the British and the American, circulate 6,000,000 a year, and there are 42 private publishers besides, one of which alone sells 750,000 annually. The Bibles are published in a great variety of forms, and are far superior to the Bibles of half a century ago. The maps, concordances, pictures, text-books, and all kinds of helps are the best that can be obtained, while formerly there were almost none of these things.

Again the literature published to help children and others to get at the meaning and applications of Scripture, including pamphlets like lesson quarterlies and teachers' monthlies, as well as solid volumes, amounts to several tens of millions annually, next in amount to the secular newspapers.

Never has there been so much done in the exploration of Bible lands for recovering the relics of the past; never so much written about the Bible in secular newspapers

and in popular magazines; never so many books published relating to the Bible; never so many courses of Bible study in our Colleges and Universities. It seems as if the moral atmosphere had been so changed that the difference could be read from the stars.

**II. The International Sunday School Executive Committee.** — The work of this committee has been so quietly done, and so overshadowed by the work of the International Lesson Committee, that few seem to know how vast is its work, how complete and extensive its organization, how great its working forces, how much it has accomplished. Great men have summarized the religious movements and educational forces of the country without recognizing its work, or seeming to know that it exists.

At the remarkable gathering of religious educators at Chicago in the spring of 1903, at which the Religious Education Association was formed, the first public meeting had for its subject, "The Next Step Forward in Religious Education." The seven chief answers presented by the speakers as to what this next step should be were: —

1. Manual training of the young in all forms of religious activity, in preparation for their work in the church and in life.

2. Making the present teachers better, and the future teachers better still.

3. Greater emphasis on the teaching function of the ministry.

4. An organized and aggressive campaign of universal Bible study according to the best educational methods.

5. Better provisions for the training of teachers; the best apparatus of all kinds, libraries, normal classes, training schools, and the like.

6. Emphasis on the duty of the religious training of the children in the home.

7. Bible study in colleges in the regular curriculum.

Now the International Association for years has been taking the first six of these seven great steps, and urging them on the Sunday Schools all over the country.

The whole country has been divided into nine great districts, each with an executive committee and officers.

Every state and territory in the Union (except Alaska and Indian Territory) is organized to carry on this work.

Each state is subdivided into smaller districts, so as to reach as far as possible all the Sunday Schools, and inspire them to better Bible work, better teaching, better grading, better organization.

The general organization employs the best available talent. Besides the chairman, a business man who gives four-fifths of his time and six or seven thousand dollars a year to forwarding the work, there are six paid workers who give all their time, and a number of other special workers who give a portion of their time. The annual expenses are now about \$20,000, in addition to what is done by the chairman.

Besides this, there are from one to seven paid workers in each of the states of the Union, except seven, making over one hundred people employed on full time by the various state associations, at an expense of nearly \$200,000. New York this year spends \$16,000; Pennsylvania \$21,000; Illinois over \$10,000. All this to bring the best training to superintendents and teachers, and to make the best Bible knowledge available to all the Sunday Schools of the land.

This organization stands : —

1. For the betterment of the Sunday School all along the line.

2. For teacher training, one college professor giving his whole time to this work.

3. For “the assimilation of the best results of modern educational science.”

4. For Bible study, leaving such methods as the Higher Criticism and special doctrinal teaching to denominational and individual writers.

5. For the graded Sunday School, along International lines, as containing the best possibilities for the Sunday School, but revised and improved as fresh light and experience may guide.

6. For the widest spreading of every good thing in Sunday School lines throughout the whole Sunday School world, especially to the smaller schools which would otherwise be unable to come in contact with them.

In the words of Rev. E. Morris Fergusson of New Jersey, one of the wisest, most progressive, and most successful of the state secretaries : “There are teachers and leaders thoroughly conversant with actual conditions in the average Sunday School, trained in the methods of the new education, and busy in the work of constructing plans, evolving literature and standards of method, and perfecting local organization among the teachers, through which not this and that favored school, but a large percentage of all the Sunday Schools, are being brought into line for effective and spiritual teaching of the children.” In addition to this general organization, many of the denominational houses are carrying on the same work separately for their own churches and Sunday Schools.

III. **The Religious Education Association.** — This great association grew out of a very deep, growing, and almost universal feeling that “the religious and moral instruction of the young is at present inadequate, and imperfectly correlated with other instruction in history, literature, and the sciences; that the Sunday School, as the primary institution for the religious and moral education of the young, should be conformed to a higher ideal,” and made more efficient for its work; and that there should be a more perfect and widely extended Bible study and Bible teaching. As the electricity pervading clouds and earth is condensed into a flash of lightning, so this deep and broad feeling was crystallized into visible form in February, 1903, at Chicago, in this much-needed and remarkable movement.

The *personnel* of the Convention when it came into being was remarkable. Of those who took part in the six sessions 15 were or had been college presidents, and 12 were college professors; on the preliminary committees 25 were college presidents and 62 college professors; and of the 60 members of the committees appointed to carry out the plans of the new organization, 18 are or were college presidents and 13 college professors. The influential majority of persons connected with the organization consists of eminent educators, whose work is with young men and women rather than children. The constitution is almost identical with the long-tried and proved constitution of the National Education Association.

While in its first call the Sunday School was the most prominent factor, the Convention immediately overflowed those narrow banks far and wide, like the Jordan in its spring floods.

Its purpose is very much wider than Sunday School teaching. It proposes to conduct its work under seventeen departments, as follows: (1) The Council, (2) Universities and Colleges, (3) Theological Seminaries, (4) Churches and Pastors, (5) Sunday Schools, (6) Secondary Public Schools, (7) Elementary Public Schools, (8) Private Schools, (9) Teacher Training, (10) Young Men's and Young Women's Christian Associations, (11) Young People's Societies, (12) The Home, (13) Libraries, (14) The Press, (15) Correspondence Instruction, (16) Summer Assemblies, (17) Religious Art and Music.

Its plan is very broad. Its purpose is to "include within its coöperation all types of religious thought, all schools of criticism, and to give its adhesion to no sect or party or institution or geographical section or school of criticism." This was wise, for any other course, "in an age which demands economy of forces and the prevention of waste, and whose religious watchword is federation, would be a blunder."

In September, 1904, there were 1825 members belonging to 37 denominations, and located in 43 states, 3 territories, the District of Columbia, the Philippine Islands, and Hawaii; Alberta, Manitoba, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Ontario, and Quebec; Argentina, the British West Indies, England, Germany, India, Japan, and Turkey.

1. **This association stands** for a very wide and deep interest in Bible study, especially in our institutions of learning, and for religion as "one of the great permanent, living forces that make for individual and social well-being."

2. It stands for an emphasis on the historic study of the Bible, and for the Higher Criticism, but without any endorsement of any particular views and results.

3. It stands for the sixteen subjects rehearsed above, in addition to the Sunday School; and in this direction there is no other organization which includes and correlates the religious forces connected with so many departments of education.

4. It stands for emphasis on the new psychology, pedagogy, and child study, in their relation to the Sunday School, and especially on the grading of the Sunday School according to right principles, thus being coördinated with the International system, though teaching that the best way to improve that system is to substitute something better in its place.

5. Its emphasis is more on the theoretical side of Sunday School teaching, the investigation of principles and ideals, the larger part of its leading men being practically conversant more with the youth of college age.

6. It has a large mission in the correlation of the educational forces of the time.

7. It has a wide and noble field as a "clearing-house of ideas," an "experiment-station"; a centre of scientific investigation in respect to everything relating to moral and religious education.

It can conduct experiments over a series of years, and test the various theories and schemes. It can find enough schools which will be willing to be the subject of these investigations under their guiding hand, in new schemes and old, in modified forms of many kinds for a period long enough to ascertain the results, not in one direction only, but in many: as to Bible knowledge, as to spiritual results, as to the effects on the home and the family, as to its influence on the Sunday School in gathering all the children of each community into the Sunday School, as



to the training and preparation of teachers for their work. There is no other instrumentality now in existence which can as well conduct in a truly scientific spirit these investigations and experiments.

**IV. The American Bible League.**—Planned several years before the R. E. A., but not materializing till the year following that organization, —in the spring of 1904, —the American Bible League was formed, “not to oppose” the work of the R. E. A., but “to place positive, aggressive, constructive study of the Bible in the path of destructive criticism.” It does not stand opposed to the “historic spirit” or to Biblical criticism, but to some of the results which are given to the public in their name. President Patton of Princeton, in his opening address, says:—

“We want criticism, intelligent criticism, of the Bible. We can’t shut it up in a glass case; we can’t make an expurgatorius of books against it. Unless the Bible can stand in the daylight, there is no use keeping it in the dark, and it ought to go down. We all admit that this controversy must be managed by minute experts of the Bible on each side. We are willing to submit our case to the court, and we expect a verdict.”

Professor Robert Wilson, also of Princeton Theological Seminary, spoke as follows: “The only way in which the conservative party can maintain its position in the field of Biblical criticism is by showing that the premises of the radical critics are false; by showing through the more thorough investigation of the facts that the foundations upon which the magnificent structures of the critics rest are, indeed, groundless, unscientific, and illogical, unproved, and often incapable of proof.”

The American Bible League stands for the historic faith. Every member of the American Bible League is required to subscribe to the following: "Believing in the divine origin, inspiration, integrity, and supreme authority of the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, I desire to become a member of the American Bible League."

"In carrying out our great work we shall meet biblical experts of the highest rank with experts of the highest rank, and a negative, destructive scholarship with a positive, constructive scholarship that, please God, shall win the day."

For this end it will publish a magazine, called the *Bible Student and Teacher*, and a series of Bible League Primers. It proposes the organization of branch Leagues in various centres, and within them League circles in colleges, schools, Christian associations, and in Sunday Schools.

**V. The Bible Teachers Training School**, of which Dr. Wilbert W. White is the indefatigable originator and president, has entered its new and beautiful home on Lexington Avenue, New York. It is doing a noble work in training teachers in Bible knowledge and thorough methods of Bible study. Dr. White is a genius in this direction. It publishes the *Bible Record* for ten months in the year, and has for its goal "a Bible Teachers College, which shall open its doors to all who can secure enough leisure to study the Bible for three months, for a year, for two years. The college must have the most eminent scholars, the most aggressive Christian workers, the most devout and spiritual assistants upon its teaching staff. It must have a library of the best books upon the Bible, and upon all phases of its history and influence. It

must own the best maps and the best pictures of the Orient, in which the Bible was written. It deserves and could wisely and profitably use buildings as imposing as those in which the Teachers College now does its inspiring work."

VI. **Extension courses for lay students** are given by the Union Theological Seminary, New York, under the directorship of Professor Richard M. Hodge. Courses on Bible study and religious education are given at the seminary, at the Teachers College, Columbia University, and at churches. A syllabus of Religious Education, of Old Testament Literature, of The Teaching of Jesus, and of The Prophets of Israel, are issued by the department.

VII. **The International Bible Reading Association** was originated in 1882, and the honorary secretary, Mr. Charles Waters, of 56 Old Bailey, London, suggested the plan to a committee of the Sunday School Union, and ever since has promoted it with unflagging energy and enthusiasm.

The object is to promote the constant use of God's Word as a daily companion and guide, through Bible reading in the home, by providing a method whereby the reading may be rendered intelligent and profitable. It also aims to help teachers and scholars in their study of the Sunday School lesson. It presents a series of daily readings on the subjects of the International Lessons.

Members include all ages and classes without limit, the conditions being an intention to read the portions regularly, and the payment of three cents annual membership subscription if connected with a branch, or six cents if not. Members are supplied monthly with leaflets con-

taining brief "hints" on the daily readings, and quarterly, with an illustrated circular letter, which, with circulars, etc., amount to more than 12,000,000 a year. There were, in 1903, more than 800,000 members in 60 different countries. Mr. W. Shaw, Tremont Temple, Boston, is one of the honorary secretaries.

VIII. **The Young Men's Christian Associations** have a Bible study department, in which, according to the last annual report, there were 1693 classes. The secretary writes me, under date of June 23, that "there are approximately 35,000 students in the Bible classes of our city, town, and railroad associations, and 25,000 in the Bible classes of our Student Associations."

IX. **The Baraca Movement** was started at Syracuse, New York, in 1890, by Mr. M. H. Hudson, a business man of that city, with a class of 18 young men, and the desire to bring young men under the influence of Bible study. Its platform is "young men at work for young men, all standing by the Bible and Bible School."

"We aim in our organization to make each man feel that it's his class, not the property of the teacher. We try to arouse a strong class spirit, an enthusiasm for the Baraca, and pride in its success."

The movement has spread rapidly till there are now 1200 classes, numbering 30,000 members, in every state of the Union, in England, and in Canada. And Mr. Hudson writes me that 145 men have joined his Church from his class alone.

Add to these, **the American Institute of Sacred Literature**, centred at the University of Chicago, with branches in other cities, publishing books and reaching a large number of young people.

**Correspondence Schools**, of which that by the American Institute of Sacred Literature, and the Moody Institute in Chicago, are among the leading ones, are giving training courses for Sunday School teachers through instruction by correspondence.

**The Christian Endeavor and other Young People's Unions and Leagues**, with their 2,700,000 young people pledged to read the Bible and aided in its study.

**Summer Assemblies**, of which there are many all over the country.

**Summer Schools** for Bible study for ministers and teachers, held at university centres and at theological seminaries.

**Courses of Lectures on the Bible**, such as were given Saturday mornings by the Twentieth Century Club of Boston to crowded audiences in the Colonial Theatre; besides lectures, readings, and class lessons in their own rooms in the afternoon.

**Courses of Lectures in Individual Churches, and Bible Institutes, and great Teachers' Meetings** in cities and towns.

All these are but a portion of the organizations working for more and better Bible study.

Now who can look with open eyes upon these signs of a fresh and increasing interest in Bible study, which recall the great outburst of Bible reading in the times of the Reformation, both in Germany and England, — and yet talk of "the decline of Bible study"! We are reminded of the letter Chaplain McCabe once sent to Colonel Ingersoll: —

"DEAR COLONEL, — Ten years ago you made the following prediction: 'Ten years from this time two theatres will be built for one church.' The time is up.

The Methodists are now building four churches every day, — one every six hours. Please venture upon another prediction for the year.”

“Lo! there breaks a yet more glorious day;  
The saints triumphant rise in bright array;  
The King of Glory passes on His way!  
From earth's wide bounds, from ocean's farthest coast,  
Thro' gates of pearl streams in the countless host,  
Singing to Father, Son, and Holy Ghost,  
‘Hallelujah!’”

## IX

### METHODS OF BIBLE STUDY FOR THE SUNDAY SCHOOL

THERE is *one best purpose* in studying the Bible, the one for which John wrote his Gospel, — “that ye may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God ; and that believing ye may have life in His name.” But there is not *one best way* of studying the Bible ; there are many best ways, all of them aids in reaching the supreme end ; just as there are many ways of studying nature, — the scientist’s way, the poet’s way, the artist’s way, the farmer’s way, and the way “ that leads through nature up to nature’s God.” There is a tendency for each age to have its own favorite way, and to claim that it is *the* way, the best way ; like the different animals in Professor Amos R. Wells’s bright fable of their convention to choose a king :

“ They held a great meeting a king to select,  
And the kangaroo rose in a dignified way,  
And said, ‘ I’m the one you should surely elect,  
For I can outleap every beast here to-day.’  
Said the eagle, ‘ How high can you climb toward the sky ?’  
Said the nightingale, ‘ Favor us, please, with a song !’  
Said the hawk, ‘ Let us measure our powers of eye !’  
Said the lion, ‘ Come, wrestle, and prove you are strong !’  
But the kangaroo said, ‘ It would surely be best,  
In our choice of a king, to make leaping the test !’ ”

So each method of Bible study presents its claim. One can do this ; another can do that. One says, Mine is the

royal way of studying the Bible; another declares, Mine is the "open sesame" to the divine treasure-house. But many methods are good. They are all kings, all "open sesames." Each one contributes its share to the knowledge and power of the Word. Each one has its share in building the spiritual temple. And the temple can be perfected only by the correlation and mutual help of all.

## PART I

### THE HISTORIC METHOD OF BIBLE STUDY AND THE HIGHER CRITICISM

Although this method is old, and is in some form used by all scholars, yet within a few years its newer forms and proclaimed results have been brought into such prominence in this country, accepted by so many, opposed by so many, explained in learned volumes, exploited in popular literature, taught in the colleges, so urged or condemned in public and in private, that they have knocked at the door of the Sunday School. And the question must be decided by Sunday School teachers, — what shall be their attitude towards the historic study of the Bible and its daughter the Higher Criticism, and what use can they make of it in teaching their classes?

Not many years ago in the town of Hamath in Northern Syria was discovered a sacred stone with Hittite inscriptions throwing light upon that ancient race referred to in Genesis, but for many centuries unknown to history, inso-much that many believed that the Bible story of the Hittites was legendary. This stone was with great difficulty purchased for a museum, and was being carted away to the



Euphrates to be shipped, when there occurred an unusual display of November meteors. This frightened the people of Hamath; they thought that God was angry with them for selling the sacred stone, and that he was throwing the stars about in his wrath. They sent a deputation after the stone and demanded its return. The old Turk who had it in charge, after a long conference, told them that they had completely misunderstood the meaning of the falling stars; that so far from expressing God's anger, they meant, on the contrary, that God was so glad on account of their self-denial in yielding the stone to science that he was setting off fireworks in heaven for joy.

This is a pretty fair picture of the present situation in regard to the Higher Criticism. Men of the more moderate, constructive, and devotional school of the higher critics, of which Professor George Adam Smith is a fair representative, believe most sincerely that they are doing a great service to God and to the Bible. They believe that they have removed what Goldwin Smith calls "Christianity's millstone, fertile in casuistry, bigotry, and cruel oppression"; that they have saved many from the disaster of being unable to reconcile a belief in the goodness of God with what they term "the rigorous laws," "the pitiless tempers," and "the atrocities which are narrated by the Old Testament histories, and sanctioned by its laws."

Professor George Adam Smith says: "I know no sadder tragedy than this innumerable repeated one, nor any service which it were better worth doing than the attempt to help men out of its perplexities. The most advanced modern criticism provides grounds for the proof of a

Divine Revelation in the Old Testament at least more firm than those on which the older apologetic used to rely." Professor Budde, one of the most eminent of German critics, writes to Professor Smith that as for himself his "belief in a genuine revelation of God in the Old Testament remains rock-fast." Even Professor Cheyne protests that "Our ambition as interpreters is nothing less than to get to the heart of the Old Testament; . . . that our critical freedom is not the freedom of scepticism, but of a purified faith; . . . that faith, as the Oxford of to-day knows full well, is the jewel of the soul alike to the critic and to the simple-minded Christian."

I quote these words of the higher critics, not as endorsing all the results to which they have come in respect to the Bible, for I differ decidedly from many of their views, but that all may recognize them not only as great scholars but as devoted Christian men of deep piety and reverence for the Scriptures, as earnest seekers after the truth, and fellow-laborers for the coming of the Kingdom of God; in order that all personalities may be eliminated, and the only questions with all shall be, What is true? and What is the best way to promote the study and the influence of the Word of God?

But when the results claimed by even the moderate higher critics are plainly stated, they strike the ordinary believer in the truth of the Bible with a shock. There is a strong feeling that many of the claimed results are not true, that the critics' "reasoning can be shown to be unscientific and misleading; that, almost without limit, they assume, as fundamental facts, things which are not facts, but theories." And that even their theories may be

wrong; that of possible conjectures and inferences from facts they have chosen certain ones from among others equally good and treated them as facts. Indeed, most of the contradictions spoken of are not in the Bible as it stands, but are created by the working theories of the critics, who bid us "beware of the siren voice of the harmonizer." And the scheme seems to be full of inferences, which are not borne out as necessarily true by well-known facts in life, in literature, and in history, which can be tested, and where "the voice of the harmonizer" must be heard.

By the prevalent school of higher critics, the earlier books of the Bible are not regarded as true history, but as a "framework woven from the raw material of myth and legend," as "an Epic of Humanity."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> They say that "on the present evidence it is impossible to be sure of more than that."

"The narratives of the patriarchs contain a substratum of actual personal history." The transactions between individuals, such as Jacob, Esau, Israel, may often most naturally be explained as transactions between tribes. The first chapter of Genesis is not a revelation but a poem or legend. All have been written at a late date, and are "full of conceptions of a later date."

According to Professor Driver, in the words of the *Sunday School Times*, "it is an essential and inseparable part of the theory advocated in his volumes that the earlier strata of the history recorded in the Old Testament are a mixture of fact and legend, while in the later strata the history has been systematically falsified, either through ignorance or with the intent to deceive, in the interest of the political and religious opinions of their authors. This applies, not to the books of Chronicles alone, but to every part of the Old Testament that contains statements of historical fact. And this theoretical presupposition is consistently accompanied by the practical habit of finding contradictions and other incredible statements everywhere, even at the cost of forced and unnatural interpretation."

Jehovah, according to their theory, was a tribal God at first, and

Now it is not strange that not only the general body of Christians, but scholars equal in scholarship to these others, familiar with the historic study of the Bible, with minds equally open to receive light from all sources, should feel that these teachings are undermining the very foundations of belief in God's Word ; that much power is lost, that the glory of divine revelation is dimmed, and that these views have been the means of undermining the faith of some in the Word of God, as even Professor Nash in his *History of the Higher Criticism* sorrowfully acknowledges, though he believes that their faith in the end will be built on a rock-foundation instead of on sand.

Professor Marvin R. Vincent, in a little brochure called *That Monster The Higher Critic*, illustrates one aspect of the popular attitude toward biblical criticism by the "story of a wag who laid a wager that he would break up a country menagerie and circus. Accordingly, when the rustic crowd had duly inspected the elephant and the hyenas, and were seated round the arena eagerly awaiting the entrance of the clown and the bareback rider, he rushed into the ring, waving his hat, and shouting : —

" "Ladies and gentlemen, save yourselves! The Gyascutus has broke loose!!"

"Dire was the panic that followed; numerous the bruises and scratches; appalling the damage to bonnets and draperies; but the tent was emptied at last, and the farmers and their wives and daughters were jogging homeward

monotheism was a late evolution from polytheism, through the inspiration of God, which transfigured the legends, myths, and traditions, and made them the medium of teaching the great truths of Divine Revelation. The whole structure of the Old Testament is changed.

and congratulating each other on their escape, when it occurred to some of them to ask, 'What *is* a gyascutus, anyway?'<sup>1</sup>

"Upon the settled faith and tranquil content of a large body of Christians breaks the cry, 'The higher criticism has broken loose!' It is charging, head on, with smoking nostrils, against the Bible! It means destruction to the faith once delivered to the saints.

"Meanwhile few stop to ask, 'What is higher criticism, anyway?' The majority run; that is, they evade the question with some such irrelevant platitude as 'The old Bible is good enough for me.'"

Now, there is no panic in the Church about the Higher Criticism. But there is a hesitation about receiving such revolutionary ideas, without the most positive proof. There is a questioning whether "the present is but a new gust of the old tempest." There is a determination to wait awhile, in a time when dead theories, scientific far more even than theological, are strewn thick along the path of Progress.

There is an intention to search out the truth by equal scholarship, equal scientific research, equally open minds, and learn whether there may not be found truer inferences from the facts, a wider horizon, an interpretation which will embody the good, and avoid the dangers, of both views. In a word, whether the Higher Criticism is an imaginary monster, or an angel with healing in his

<sup>1</sup> Professor Vincent does not tell us what a Gyascutus is, but the *Century Dictionary* says that it is either a beetle about an inch long, or an imaginary animal of tremendous size, with two short legs on one side and two long ones on the other, adapted to feeding on the side of a very steep mountain. Compare Poe's story of the Sphynx.

wings; or whether there will emerge a human saint, better adapted than an angel to be the divine instrument in transforming the world into the Kingdom of God. For the particular theories of which we have been speaking are but a small part of the work the Higher Criticism is doing.

Thus the present situation reminds us of the gathering to celebrate the laying of the foundations of the new Temple by the returned exiles from Babylon, when

“All the people shouted with a great shout, when they praised the LORD, because the foundation of the house of the LORD was laid.

“But many of the priests and Levites and chief of the fathers, *who were* ancient men, that had seen the first house, when the foundation of this house was laid before their eyes, wept with a loud voice; and many shouted aloud for joy:

“So that the people could not discern the noise of the shout of joy from the noise of the weeping of the people.”

Then the prophet Haggai came upon the scene, and cheered both parties by foretelling that though the new Temple was far inferior to the old, yet in some way, unrealized by either party and inconceivable at the time, by unexpected changes, “*The glory of this latter house shall be greater than of the former, saith the Lord of hosts: and in this place will I give peace, saith the Lord of hosts.*”

Thinking of “dogma” not as one of the great doctrines which never die, but rather as an opinion or theory about them, we would join with John Hooker:—

“A worn-out Dogma died; around its bed  
Its votaries wept as if all Truth were dead.  
But heaven-born Truth is an immortal thing;  
Hark how its lieges give it welcoming:  
‘The King is dead—long live the King!’”

Now the teacher who has come in contact with the modern views cannot be indifferent as to which school is right, and how far each is right. By his birthright as a Christian he wants the truth, "though the sky should fall, sun, moon, and stars and all." In no case is there danger that the Bible will be destroyed, however much individuals may suffer. Divine Revelation will not be taken away. Not one of the great truths of the Gospel, their form of statement purified and brightened by the conflicts of the ages, will perish. Either the theories will die, or they will be modified into some helpful form.

And yet it does make a difference which view one takes in teaching the Old Testament.

On the one hand, he will have an easy way to avoid some moral difficulties, which can be as easily avoided in more natural ways, but, on the other, he loses no small power in his teaching.

A divine revelation, based on the spiritual illumination of legend and myth, cannot have the same power or give the same assurance of faith as one based on actual history and biographic fact.

It may be true that "if we realize that the Bible is the story of the lives of men who were groping after God, wishing to find God, trying to understand God, and coming in various degrees to knowledge of Him and fellowship with Him, he will find many, if not most, of his difficulties about the interpretation of the Bible removed." But it does make a vast difference whether the story is true or not. The deeds, the victories, of an imaginary character cannot have the same moral force in character-building nor the same power over the conscience as the same deeds of faith and heroism and self-sacrifice actually wrought by

real men like ourselves, and therefore possible to us, and imperative upon us.

The victory of Jack the Giant Killer has no such moral power over a child as David's faith-victory over Goliath. Shakespeare's immortal characters have power just as far as we recognize them as true to actual life. Not one of them can touch the true Bible stories in character-building power. Jesus Christ as a mere idealized man, a picture of the imagination, could never have even begun to do what the real Christ, the Son of God, actually coming from heaven as bearer of good tidings from God, and actually giving His life in loving atonement for the sins of man, has wrought in this world. A "human Christ" has always been a failure. A providential guidance of persons or of nations shown in a history that is largely legendary, although "immortal with truthfulness to the realities of human nature and of God's education of mankind," cannot have the teaching power of a true story of the actual education of mankind wrought out by God.

Professor George Adam Smith says that Butler, Foster, Maurice, Kingsley, Newman, Robertson of Brighton, Candlish, Arnot, Spurgeon, and Beecher have all used the Old Testament chiefly for its characters. It was not the miracles of Old Testament history nor the national events upon which the preaching of our fathers fed and grew strong, but the personal elements; the development of character, the moral struggles, checks, catastrophes, and recoveries in which so many of the books of the Old Testament are so very rich. That is true. But all these great preachers presented those characters as having actually lived, as does the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews



the names in his catalogue of the immortal heroes of faith. The beautiful legends of the Knights of the Round Table, the hero-tales of *The Light of Asia*, the Sagas of the Norsemen, helpful and uplifting as they are, never had, and never can have, such power as the heroic deeds of actual men of like passions with ourselves.

Now what course shall Sunday School teachers take under these circumstances? Remember that I am not speaking to specially prepared teachers of adult classes, who rightfully discuss more fully these questions. Nor am I speaking to or for expert scholars, lifelong students of the Bible, professors and scientific investigators. God speed them in their work. It is not for me to imagine myself competent to offer any advice or suggestion to such men, whom I admire and love. But it may be right for me to give the results of many years of study and thought and reading and experience to the average teacher in the Sunday School.

1. **Avoid all personalities** and all slurs upon those who differ from you, and especially all bitter attacks on that which is not fully understood. There is nothing which hurts a cause more than to pour hot shot into a man of straw, imagining and representing it to be the enemy, who, meanwhile, looks on in safety and smiles. I once heard Henry Ward Beecher, during his great trial, relate in self-defence at one of his prayer meetings how he and his friend were mobbed at an anti-slavery meeting in New York. He escaped through a back entrance, but the mob followed him, and, thinking him in a certain house, attacked it with stones, rotten eggs, and all manner of missiles. But Mr. Beecher was in the opposite house, and looked upon the attack with smiling cheer-

fulness. "It did me no harm," he said, "for I wasn't there."

Nor is it wise for any one to expose himself to the retort which that bright book *Collections and Recollections* says that an English bishop made to a man who boasted that "he had only contempt for Aristotle." "One thing is certain," retorted the bishop, "it is not the kind of contempt which familiarity breeds."

2. **Be receptive**, open-minded to all truth from every source, let all the windows of your soul be open in every direction. The bee sucks honey from every flower, even the poisonous ones. Learn wisdom from your enemies as well as your friends, for they may point out something you would otherwise fail to see. There is no impassable barrier between the divergent views. There is no case where "one is infallible and the other always right."

Jean Ingelow in one of her later poems, *The Monitions of the Unseen*, pictures a faithful and earnest young minister, who became utterly discouraged at the seeming failure of his work for the poor and suffering. One day he had a vision which revealed to him the cause of his failure. He had acted upon the theory that the whole world was sharply divided into two distinct classes, — on the one hand those that helped, on the other those who needed help, while, as a matter of fact, all needed to help and all needed to be helped.

To imagine that there is a sharp division, as some have claimed, between the more conservative and the more radical school, that there is no "perfect day in June" between arctic winter and tropic summer is simply to invite failure, and to defy facts.

Every one needs for his spiritual vision the magical

qualities of Mr. Titbottom's Spectacles described in *Prue and I*. When their owner looked through these glasses at people, he ceased to see them as they ordinarily appeared on the street; he saw their real essential character. Wonderful were the revelations that were made.<sup>1</sup>

Blessed are those who see with such vision the truths that lie hidden beneath unfavorable circumstances; who take the Court witnesses' oath, and see "the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth."

**3. Distinguish between the Historic Method and the things which various persons claim as the results of the Method.** As a matter of fact the ideas which usually present themselves to the mind when the Higher Criticism is mentioned are really but a portion of what the Higher Criticism has done for the study of the Bible.

The Historic method has come to stay, rather in some measure it has always been with us, because it is a right method, full of enlightening results.

When Madame Roland stood upon the guillotine in

<sup>1</sup> He looked at one man and saw nothing but a ledger. Another was simply a billiard cue, another a bank bill, another a great hog, or a wolf, or a vulgar fraction. On the other hand, he saw the good that others failed to see. One of his school teachers was a deep well of living water in which he saw the stars. Another was a tropical garden full of fruits and flowers. In one woman's heart lay concealed in the depth of character great excellences like pearls at the bottom of the sea, little suspected by most, but perhaps love is nothing else than the sight of them by one person. Another, called an old maid, was a white lily, fresh, luminous, and fragrant still. Another's nature was a tropic in which the sun shone, and birds sang, and flowers bloomed forever. His wrinkled grandmother appeared as a Madonna, "and I have yet heard of no queen, no belle, no imperial beauty whom in grace, and brilliancy, and persuasive courtesy she might not have surpassed."

what is now the Place de la Concorde in Paris, she looked at the statue of Liberty, which stood where now stands the Egyptian Obelisk, and exclaimed, "Oh, Liberty, how many crimes have been committed in thy name!" Then the axe fell, and another crime was committed in the name of Liberty. But Liberty is just as sweet and precious, to be longed for and fought for, as if no crimes had been committed in her name.

So the Historic method is just as good, as helpful, as enlightening, as if no mistake, no false inference, had been made in its name.

Some wise writer warns us "not to throw away the baby with the water in which it has been washed."

To me the new emphasis on the Historic method has been a real blessing. The words and messages receive a new meaning from their historic setting. The books of the prophets have a new meaning when we read them not as isolated themes, but as sermons and orations spoken in times of great need in order to accomplish great purposes. Every far outlook into the future shines clearer on account of its setting in the present, and becomes more full of instruction for all lands, and of hope for all time. Prophecy is thus seen to be, in the words of the late Professor Davidson, "the philosophy of history. Prophecy is history become conscious, history expressing its own meaning. But prophecy is not the philosophy of ordinary, but of Jewish history. Now Jewish history consisted of two factors, — human activity, as in ordinary history, and a supernatural divine guidance; and therefore prophecy must partake of two factors also, human insight and divine illumination."

In like manner the epistles are transfigured with fresh

meaning. The history, on the other hand, is made more clear, more vivid, more instructive by means of the prophets and epistles. The whole Bible is thus made more effective for teaching, and more attractive to young and old.

4. **The Sunday School teacher should dwell in the atmosphere of the devotional, character-forming, life-guiding elements of the Scripture.** All teachers, higher critics or not, advocate this. There are just as distinct atmospheres of Bible study as there are in families and churches, which form the most important part of their influence over others.

Every one recognizes that there are distinct atmospheres in the study of literature. The discussion of the questions whether Bacon or Shakespeare wrote the dramas attributed to Shakespeare; whether one author or many wrote the Iliad or the tales gradually grew, and were moulded into their present form by the genius of Homer, or whether the author was Homer or another man by the name of Homer, as some critics claim that the Gospel of John was not written by the apostle John, but by another man by the name of John—all these and similar discussions belong to an entirely different literary atmosphere from that created by the study of Homer and Shakespeare as literature.

So in Bible study there are several distinct atmospheres—an atmosphere of criticism, a literary atmosphere, a devotional atmosphere, an atmosphere of conscience and of right living. “A work of art is an object seen through a temperament,” says some one. Our view of the Bible is usually seen through a temperament. No one really understands the positions of the higher critics till he has dwelt in their atmosphere for a time. There is a literary

atmosphere as unrecognized by many as the bright skies beyond the clouds. There is an atmosphere that belongs to the religious life, inspiring, invigorating, converting, transforming.

And as this is the influential atmosphere of the teacher's own life, of every Christian's life, as it is that in which the main work of the Sunday School as of the church is to be done, it is necessary that the Sunday School teacher should live and move and have his being there ; while he visits and explores the others as thoroughly as possible chiefly that he may clarify, invigorate, make life-giving the atmosphere in which he teaches and lives.

I once asked an agent of the Tiffanys why they, with all their skill and modern inventions, did not put into their windows such beautiful colors as we find in some of the old cathedrals, the glory of which, when once seen, will never fade from the memory. He said that only age could give such charm to the colors ; that the dust was an inch thick on some of these windows. An English rector desiring to renovate his church had the dust cleaned from its windows, with the result that the tone of their beauty was ruined.

There are some great essential truths, tried and tested by centuries of experience, to which the dust of the ages gives beauty and power, and however we change, the philosophy which underlies them, and the words in which they are expressed are as fixed and eternal as the soul which outlasts the stars.

The atmosphere of these is the atmosphere of the Sunday School.

5. **The teacher should recognize** that many of the results claimed as settled with a certain unanimity by one school

of the higher critics are still under fire. The conflict of ideas, "the battle of the books," is not ended.<sup>1</sup> There are questions on each side that have not yet been answered by the other. There are difficulties not yet solved. New books are coming out every year. One of the best and best known of all the higher critics said to me not long ago that it was only the second-rate critics who were so infallibly sure; and another agreed with me when in a discussion I said that no one could possibly tell just what position would be taken ten years from now, or what new light might rise above the horizon.

It is repeatedly said that we ought not to teach the children as true those things they will have to unlearn ten years later. Exactly. But it is well to be sure what things, traditional or critical, will not change in ten years. Teach what you believe to be true and adapted to the children's needs. But do not teach as true what is doubtful, nor as settled what is still in the conflict. Whatever you teach on some of these questions will be likely to meet with some changes in ten years; but that will not injure the children of the present any more than similar

<sup>1</sup> Professor Robert W. Rogers, the Assyriologist, speaking of Professor Delitzsch's *Babel und -Bibel* writes from Berlin: "To those who are unable to keep close watch upon German thought it would be impossible to imagine the effect produced by these two lectures. The first lecture contained only thirty pages, the second but twenty-nine. In reply to these brief papers there had appeared up to a few weeks ago (May, 1904) no less than one thousand three hundred and fifty small articles, more than three hundred lengthy papers and twenty-eight brochures, some big enough to be reckoned as books, and this in Germany alone. In addition to these, all of which were more or less valuable, there were published many thousands of worthless performances. Let this stand as a proof of the undying, unconquerable interest in the Bible. Let one man attack it, and thousands spring to its defence."

changes have harmed the vigorous generations of the past.

The conflict of argument and discussion is sure to bring out more clearly the real truth, differing from what either side argued for, or expected. When Gareth of the Knights of the Round Table met what seemed to him the last enemy of humanity and "Through the dim dawn advanced the monster," and with one mighty stroke the Knight split his skull, out there

"Issued the bright face of a blooming boy  
Fresh as a flower new born."

So Tennyson, in *The Ancient Sage*, declares that faith

"Reels not in the storm of warring words,  
She brightens at the clash of 'Yes' and 'No,'  
She sees the Best that glimmers through the Worst,  
She feels the sun is hid but for a night,  
She spies the summer through the winter bud,  
She tastes the fruit before the blossom falls,  
She hears the lark within the songless egg,  
She finds the fountain where they wailed 'mirage.'"

The history of the progress of the church has been the history of conflicts and discussions. In times of quiet, the quiet of indifference, of neglect, of coldness, or of compulsory unity, — the great doctrines, the institutions, the teachings of the Bible have a tendency to attach to themselves various accretions and imperfections derived from their secular surroundings, from the sciences and philosophies of the day, and from the moral practices and trends of the times, like the Sabbath rules of the Pharisees in the time of Christ. For the "warfare of science with theology" is at heart chiefly the warfare of new science with old science, and new philosophies with old philosophies.



Plato's description of the soul as like the marine Glaucus who cast himself into the sea, and cruised along the shores with the whales, is not an altogether unfair picture of many of the Christian teachings and practices as seen in past ages. "His ancient nature cannot be easily perceived, because the ancient members of his body are partly broken off, and others worn away ; and besides this, other things are grown to him, such as shellfish, and seaweeds, and stones." It is by conflict, by discussion, by criticism, that the doctrines and the institutions of the church, yea, even the soul itself, become freed from their imperfections and false accretions, and stand before the world in their true nature.

"Agitation," said Wendell Phillips, "is not a disease nor a medicine ; it is the normal state of a nation. . . . Agitation is not the cure, but the diet of a free people ; not the homeopathic or allopathic dose to which a sick land has recourse, but the daily cold water and the simple bread, the daily diet and absolute necessity, the manna of a people wandering in the wilderness. . . . If the Alps, piled in cold and still sublimity, be the emblem of despotism, the ever restless ocean is ours, which, girt within the eternal laws of gravitation, is pure only because never still."

Freedom of discussion is the atmosphere wherein truth thrives with vigor and gains its victories. "To sit on the safety valve is simply to invite an explosion." Or as Lord Rosebery once said, "You cannot prevent a storm by sitting on the barometer." Professor Rogers rightly holds that "Protestantism owes its very existence and certainly its dominating power among men to its absolutely untrammelled study and exposition of the Scrip-

tures. True Protestantism has never feared scholarship and never will. If scholarship has attacked its Bible, it has in the next moment supplied for it a new and better defence. . . . The brilliant and learned De Tocqueville used to say that 'the cure for the evils of democracy is more democracy,' and we say here that the cure for the evils of this new Assyriology is more Assyriology." And the remedy for any errors of scholarship is more scholarship.

"The only method," says Professor William M. Ramsay, "is to hold fast to the scientific principle, and to walk along the narrow path between dangers and uncertainties on either hand as unswervingly and unhesitatingly as does the pious Mohammedan across Al-Sirat, which bridges with its spider-thread breadth the chasm between him and heaven."

I do not know what form the resultant of the divergent views will take, but I believe that the trend will be in the following direction.

1. **That the Biblical order will be found to be the true order**; that as the divine revelation of God as Creator, and of a day set apart for His worship stands at the beginning of the Bible, so it stood at the beginning of the human race; that polytheism is a degeneration from monotheism, and not monotheism an evolution from polytheism; that the Babylonian stories are polytheistic degenerations from a divine revelation, and not revelation a transfigured Babylonian legend.

Professor Rogers, in a late article on the New Assyriology, speaking of the Flood stories, writes, "Is the Hebrew narrative borrowed from the Babylonian story? So many think. But the facts before us seem to demand another explanation."

Professor Delitzsch states in his *Babel und Bibel* that monotheism existed in early Babylonia, and that one of the Babylonian gods was Jahve, the Hebrew Jehovah.

2. **The history of mankind has been the history of an evolution or development**, with God in it all and behind it all. If early men were savages in outward culture and knowledge, they were at least "savages in training for angels," and in training by God their heavenly Father.

Evolution does not exclude God's personal action in providence or in miracle. In connection with a discussion on this point I asked a most distinguished professor of biology if the introduction of the personal will of Darwin in the evolution of doves, or the personal will of breeders in the swift evolution of better horses, or of gardeners in the evolution of fruits and flowers, was contrary to the doctrine of evolution. He replied that it was not.

Then I asked, Is the teaching that God has in the past, or does now, put his personal will into the evolution of the world and of man, exactly as his children are doing every day in their small way, — would this be contrary to scientific evolution? The reply was, Not at all.

This is the way we read the biblical story of mankind. It is the story of an evolution according to God's own laws always acting, but with an occasional putting of his personal will into the chain of events, and doing what would not have come to pass without that intervention and change. This seems to me the only tenable definition of a miracle. And I cannot see how in any other way God can make himself known as a personal God above nature, as a father more real and helpful than any earthly father, except in this Bible way; nor prove that the picture is false which is described in Zola's *Le Bête Humaine* of a

railway train dragged by an engine whose driver has been killed, dashing at headlong speed into the midnight. "The train is the world, we are the freight, fate is the track, death is the darkness, God is the engineer, — who is dead."

3. This evolution, recorded in the Old Testament history, up to the time of Christ, is of the same kind as has been the evolution of the race since the time of Christ, and as the evolution of every child, which, according to a favorite and doubtless true theory, is a repetition of the evolution of the race.

What is this kind of evolution ?

The child does not evolve the ideas and the ideals toward which he is being trained. They are taught him from without, and then, by a long series of struggles, of ups and downs, of errors and failures, of new light and new powers, he grows up toward the ideas and ideals, and also toward the capacity of receiving further revelations and higher ideals.

Of the same kind has been the evolution of the Kingdom of Christ. Christians did not evolve the Gospels, nor an ideal Christ, by slow growth of mind and character. The whole evolution of Christianity has been under a revelation from heaven of the highest truths, of a perfect character in Christ, and by the power of the Holy Spirit. It began with a divine revelation of God and His commands. New revelations were given in special eras. New understanding of the treasures of the revelation came to men as they were able to receive it ; just as there have come from the Book of Nature — ever the same, always full of unexplored regions and undeveloped resources — a gradual revelation of its powers and glories, of which even we in

the twentieth century have received but a few drops from its mighty ocean.

Its history has been one of conflicts, of slow growth, of strange errors, of reactions, of contradictions in practice of some of the essential principles of the Gospel, of losing or marring parts of the truth and of recovering it again as if freshly revealed, of a zigzag progress often running to extremes in some directions and then in others.

At the same time, its history has been one of continued general progress toward the ideals of the Gospel. Great prophets and preachers have arisen to condemn the errors and bring back the people to the Gospel; and great religious poets like David and his successors, who have cherished the deepest spiritual life. There have been great revivals, marvellous victories, new impulses to righteousness, fuller revelations, and clearer views and truer understanding of the old Revelation.

On the whole, there has been a steady movement toward the promised consummation of the Kingdom of God, the new heavens and new earth described in the last chapters of the Bible.

I have sometimes represented the evolution by a diagram like this : —



Now this growth of Christianity, which is plainly seen in the history we know, is a very good picture of the history of the Jews as related in Old Testament history. And this fact renders it probable that the order given in that history is the true order of the events themselves. It relieves us from most of the difficulties which have led the Higher Criticism to rearrange the order of events.

But we are still in the midst of the discussion, and all each one can do is to throw some little ray of light on the problems.

“This day the sound of battle,  
The next the victor’s song.”

In the old Greek legend of the founding of Thebes, Cadmus found the appointed site held by a great dragon which he must slay before he could build the city. Then he took the dragon’s teeth and sowed them in the field like wheat, when lo, from each one sprang an armed giant.

“The clods grow warm and crumble where he sows,  
And now the pointed spears advance in rows ;  
Now nodding plumes appear, and shining crests,  
Now the broad shoulders and the rising breasts ;  
O’er all the field the breathing harvest swarms,  
A growing host, a crop of men and arms.”

Cadmus found himself surrounded by a great army of fierce and warlike giants. He took a rock and threw it among them, striking one of them on the breast. Then instead of slaying him they went to fighting one another. And they slew one another till only one tall giant remained, and he became the helper of Cadmus in carrying stones for the walls of the hundred-gated city of Thebes. So will it be in this present conflict of theories and opinions. They are slaying one another as in the conflicts of

the past. The whole field of the past is strewn thick with dead theories and systems and philosophies, scientific, educational, religious. But in every period of conflict there stands forth after the battle some truth purer, clearer, shining down the ages like a "beautiful tall angel" warrior, with a spear like that of Milton's Ithuriel which revealed the true nature of what it touched; and this resultant truth will now, as in the past, help to build the jasper-walled City of God.

## CHAPTER X

### BIBLE STUDY FOR THE SUNDAY SCHOOL

#### PART II

##### VARIOUS METHODS

**I. Reading the Bible through in Course.** — Mr. Pycroft, in his work on how to read English history, advises his readers to gain first an outline or skeleton view of the whole course of the history, and to learn it by heart. Then every reference to the history, in book or current literature, and every study of details will immediately find their places in the progress of events, and gradually build up a well-balanced knowledge of the history; while otherwise a large portion of one's reading and study will be almost wasted as disconnected fragments, and have little part in one's intellectual equipment.

This principle is equally true of Bible study. The first thing to be done, and it should be begun in childhood, is to read the Bible through from beginning to end, and to repeat this course all through life in order to keep it in the memory; and then to learn by heart an outline of the course of history as a concrete whole.

The result will be that all other forms of Bible study will have a double value. All references to the Bible in literature will find their place in the Bible history, recall and illuminate it along its whole course. For literature



is full of the Bible. Shakespeare alone has more than five hundred and fifty quotations, allusions, or sentiments from the Bible; Tennyson has four hundred and sixty; and Farrar says that "the hundred best books, the hundred best pictures, the hundred greatest strains of music are all in it, and all derived from it."

"And, weary seekers of the best,  
We come back laden from our quest,  
To find that all the sages said  
Is in the book our mothers read."

So that whosoever is able to locate these, and all the daily references to the Bible in magazines, papers, conversations, will in time have an illuminated Bible.

The value of this movement through the Scriptures is well illustrated by President Slocum's words to the visitors at the great St. Louis Fair: "Much may justly be said of the unwisdom of superficial work in sight-seeing, as well as in the class room and laboratory, and there is danger of thinking 'a ramble through a World's Fair is an equivalent for a liberal education.' But too much emphasis cannot be laid on the value of such a ramble to the open-eyed and open-souled thousands who have waited for this event to gain their first vital knowledge of the way other workers do their work."

It is only by a knowledge of the whole Bible, a knowledge possible to every one, that the teacher can do his best work. He cannot teach any lesson well unless he regards it as part of a great whole; not as a single note, though sweet as an angel's voice, but as a part of an anthem; not as a single stone, but as part of a temple; and unless he can say with George Herbert, —

“Oh, that I knew how all thy lights combine  
 And the configurations of their storie,  
 Seeing not only how each verse doth shine,  
 But all the constellations in their glorie.”

The teacher, too, without a knowledge of the whole Bible, will miss many an illustration and suggestion which would impress the truth; and as one whose work is to cure souls, he will be like one in an apothecary shop wherein are medicines for every disease, who yet does not know what is in it or where to find the remedy he needs.

II. **The Literary Study of the Bible.** — Professor Richard Moulton, of Oxford and Chicago Universities, has made all Bible readers his debtors by pressing upon their notice the great number of literary forms in which the Bible truths are expressed, including every known form of literature, by showing their effect upon its interpretation, and by his genius in applying his wide knowledge of literature to our English Bible.

Almost equally with the modern expansion of the historic method has the literary study of the Bible, as Professor Moulton has presented it in his books, in the introductions and arrangements in his *Modern Reader's Bible*, and most expressively of all in his spoken lectures, been to me almost a new revelation.

Consider the variety of literary form in our Bible, — history, story, biography, autobiography, arguments, orations, sermons, conversations, poetry in lyric, dramatic, idyllic, and epic forms, hymns, songs, epistles, parables, proverbs, fables, enigmas, metaphors, hyperboles, epigrams. These, written by all classes and conditions of men, are adapted to all conditions and all ages, to all classes of mind, all degrees of culture. They meet every need.

Moreover, we often have to consider the form of the literature before we can, in many cases, determine the meaning and application.

Every great essential doctrine of the Bible is presented to us in a variety of literary forms, — in prose statement, in story, in parable, in poetry, in dramatic presentation, in symbol, in metaphor, and especially in history and biography as actually lived out by men and nations. And this is necessary in order to guard against mistaken interpretations, errors, and half truths, which are sure to arise from any single presentation. That Massachusetts governor who quoted Satan's words in Job as divine truth, would never have done so if he had realized that the book of Job was a dramatic poem. The pessimism in portions of Ecclesiastes, which Omar Khayyam has exaggerated, would never have been regarded as divinely authorized if its literary structure had been understood. New light is thrown on the Sermon on the Mount and some of its hard sayings by seeing how Christ expressed them in actual living.

Brandeis has well said that "nine-tenths of the serious controversies which arise in life result from misunderstanding; result from the fact that men do not know the facts which to the other party seem important, or otherwise fail to appreciate his point of view."

In revising for the Oxford University Press the helps in their Bibles, bringing them up to date, and transforming them into their *Cyclopedic Concordance*, my attention was repeatedly called to the variety of meanings a single word conveyed. The denarius, the unit of Roman coinage, or its equivalent, the drachma of the Grecian, varied at different periods and in different places. The "talent"

and the "pound" had always two or more different values. Gopher represents six different animals in different parts of our own country; there are four kinds of quart measures, and two kinds of ton, in use to-day in our country, to say nothing of other lands.

This is but an illustration of what is continually occurring in the intellectual world. Mr. Ruskin is right when he says: "There are masked words abroad, which nobody understands, but which everybody uses, and most people will also fight for, live for, or even die for, fancying they mean this or that or the other, of things dear to them: for such words wear chameleon cloaks — 'ground-lion' cloaks of the color of the ground of any man's fancy. . . . There were never creatures of prey so mischievous, never diplomatists so cunning, never poisoners so deadly, as those masked words."

For instance, in our day, "Conservative" has not always the same meaning to different people. Speak the word "Higher Critic," and the picture presented varies in different minds from an angelic messenger to a devouring dragon, from the mere insect crawling on the window-pane in Poe's story, to the monster rushing down the mountain side, as it appeared to his friend on the lounge. Years ago, if one said "Election," to one it was as a red rag to a wild bull, to another a red rose from the garden of God. Now, the study of the Bible is one of the influences which is modifying all this. I well remember how I was enlightened by seeing how Paul's doctrine of election was illustrated by his own words and experience in his shipwreck on the coast of Malta.

The churches are growing more and more united on the great practical doctrines of religion, because they are

modifying and correcting their views through the literary study of the Bible and attaching more nearly the same meaning to the same term. They have often gone through the Bible as if riding in an Irish jaunting car, back to back, each seeing an opposite view; now they are in a modern car, facing to the front and looking out on both sides. Oliver Wendell Holmes says that when John and Thomas are talking together there are always six distinct personalities taking part in the dialogue, — the real John and the real Thomas, John's ideal of himself and Thomas's ideal of himself, and each one's ideal of the other. There has been a similar experience in the relation of different denominations; but they are coming to understand one another better and see each other more nearly as they really are in the sight of God, partly, at least, through the light which comes from the literary study of the Bible.

“ If I could see  
As in truth they be,  
The glories that encircle me,  
I should lightly hold  
This tissued fold,  
With its marvellous curtain of blue and gold.

“ For soon the whole,  
Like a parchèd scroll,  
Shall before my amazèd eyes uproll,  
And without a screen,  
At one burst be seen  
The Presence in which I have always been.”<sup>1</sup>

**III. Concentrated Study on Particular Books or Periods or Sections.** — The value of this kind of study is closely

<sup>1</sup> Whytehead.

allied to the reading of the whole Bible in course, and should be conjoined with it. The same principles that apply to literary studies, to travel, and to general culture, apply here. It is no longer possible to acquire all knowledge thoroughly, but it is wise to learn some few things as completely as possible, while we know a little of many other things. It is like making a garden in the midst of a great farm. It is like the experiment station at Orono, Maine. It is mining deep and finding treasures which we had walked over again and again, unconscious of what was beneath the surface.

One of my brother ministers was near-sighted in his younger days. He had never seen a distant prospect. He did not know that there was any view beyond his narrow range of sight. When he was twelve years old, his father gave him a pair of near-sighted spectacles, and behold a new world was spread out before him, of which hitherto he had no conception. It was almost like the creation of a new world.

Such a widening of the horizon, such an illumination of certain passages of Scripture, such a revelation of hidden treasures, have come to me both while studying single lessons again and again as they have been repeated in our International Lesson courses and while pondering on entire books or on the whole period of a course for the sake of perfecting a review. Each time the illumination from within has increased, and I have almost seen in the passage the transformation described by Goethe in his *Tale of Tales*, where the plain form and rough beams of the fisherman's hut were transformed by the inner light into a silver temple of most exquisite workmanship.

We have found something of the same experience at

family prayers by sometimes studying a single book of the Bible for a long period, months or even years in succession, with various helps, translations, and sidelights, till the book was almost transfigured. In the words of another: "A new lesson or fresh subject never reveals all its truth in a first study of it. It is the ripest student of Shakespeare or of the Bible who finds most of freshness in the great book."

**IV. Word Studies.** — We must be careful to avoid the narrowness which imagines that because the broader Bible study is good, and needs to be emphasized because it had been too much neglected in the past, therefore there are not other ways as good and as necessary to the best Bible study.

**The Scientist's Way.** — Professor Henry Drummond, in his *Tropical Africa*, says that he has "lain a whole week without stirring from one spot; . . . for this is the only way to find out what really goes on in nature. . . . To watch uninterruptedly the same few yards of universe unfold its complex history, to behold the hourly resurrection of new living things, and miss no change or circumstance even of its minuter parts, to look at all, *especially* the things you have seen before, a hundred times, — to do all with patience and reverence, this is the only way to study nature." Professor Agassiz used to teach his students to look at a single fish for days at a time.

**The Poet's Way.** — Tennyson says: —

"Flower in the crannied wall,  
I pluck you out of the crannies; —  
Hold you here, root and all, in my hand,  
Little flower — but if I could understand  
What you are, root and all, and all in all,  
I should know what God and man is."

**The Literary Man's Way.** — Mr. Ruskin gives, in his *Sesame and Lilies*, one of the best examples of word study in all literature. It is well for every Bible student to study it. "First of all," he says, "I tell you earnestly and authoritatively (I *know* I am right in this), you must get into the habit of looking intensely at words, and assuring yourself of their meaning, syllable by syllable — nay, letter by letter. . . . You might read all the books in the British Museum (if you could live long enough) and remain an utterly illiterate, uneducated person; but if you read ten pages of a good book, letter by letter, — that is to say, with real accuracy, — you are forevermore in some measure an educated person."

**The Mining Way.** — Any one who has read the four large volumes of *Word Studies on the New Testament*, or Trench on the *Study of Words*, will have no question concerning the value of such studies.

Many of our words contain whole poems; others are volumes of history or philosophy. In the words of Professor Burton: "Take up the commonest words of daily speech, and put them to your ear, and they will sing like shells from the sea. There are whole poems in them, epics, idyls of every sort."

For instance, take the common word "help" in Luke 10:40, where Martha asks Jesus to bid her sister that she "help" her. This word in the Greek is a long compound word, *sūnantilab'ētai*, — *sūn*, "together with"; *anti*, "over against, on the other side"; and *lab'ētai*, "to take hold of." So that Martha's request was that Mary take hold of the burden of housekeeping with her, on the opposite side, and bear it with her. The same word is used but once more in the New Testament, in Romans 8:26, where we



are told that the Spirit "helpeth" our infirmity. The Holy Spirit takes hold of one side of the burden of our infirmity and bears it together with us. We are not left to bear it alone.

Take the word "tribulations," threshings to separate the chaff from the wheat, as described by Archbishop Trench, and still more forcible when we see the threshing instrument like a harrow with sharp pieces of flint for its teeth.

Again, in Acts 2:26, "my flesh shall rest in hope," the word for "rest" means *to dwell in a tent or tabernacle*. "It is a beautiful metaphor," says Professor Vincent. "My flesh shall *encamp on hope*; pitch its tent there to rest through the night of death, until the morning of resurrection."

When Paul speaks of his death as a "departure," the Greek word presents a picture of a ship about leaving port, loosing the ropes that bind it to the dock, drawing up the anchor, hoisting the sails, and all the preparations for starting from the harbor over an unknown sea to the desired haven.

When it is said ye are God's "husbandry," we get little idea of the meaning. The Revised Version makes it plainer when it translates the word "tilled land." But the expression becomes fuller of meaning when we see it in our ordinary language as God's "farm," God's "garden" or "orchard," with the picture of the methods of cultivation, the flowers and trees bearing all varieties of the fruits of the Spirit.

Read how William Burnet Wright in his *Master and Men*, a work on the Sermon on the Mount, unfolds the meaning of the words "comfort" and "Comforter."

We have given more than enough examples to show how rich a mine word studies may become.

I cannot close what I have to say on this point in a better way than by sustaining it with the glowing words of Farrar, "So in Holy Writ: words of it, expressions of it, separate points of it, by themselves, may sometimes create an indelible impression. The Jewish high priest wore on his Ephod a breastplate, 'ardent with gems oracular,' to which was, in some mysterious way, attached an oracle, the whole being called *Urim* and *Thummim*, or 'Lights and Truths.' The old Rabbis said that the way in which the high priest ascertained the will of God from the *Urim* was that he gazed on the graven names of the tribes of Israel, until a fire of God stole in mysterious gleams over the letters, and spelt out words of guidance. The Holy Scriptures are, if we make them so, such a *Urim* and *Thummim*, such manifestations of truths, such gleams and flashes of Holy Light. Sometimes the Spirit of God, without our desire, may, as it were, flame out before us, in letters of intense revelation, on the emerald or chrysolite of some familiar text; sometimes, in the night of meditation, it may vivify with celestial glimmerings some long-remembered, but hitherto inoperative, words."<sup>1</sup>

**V. Learning by Heart.**—The last time I ever saw Professor Andrew P. Peabody of Harvard, and Bishop Phillips Brooks, at a college dinner only a brief time before their death, both deplored the neglect of memorizing the Scriptures, and urged the revival of the custom in the Sunday School. And they were right. Any system of education, however progressive in other things,

<sup>1</sup> *The Bible and its Supremacy.*

will fail of its best results if it overlooks the laying up of treasures in the memory.

There are two seemingly opposite views advocated by wise and experienced teachers and educators.

One class advocates the memorizing of catechisms and verses of Scripture and filling the minds of children with the forms of sound words, although their meaning is not comprehended by them, because they believe that the truths enfolded in these seeds of knowledge planted in the mind will in after years spring up into plants and trees bearing fruit in character and life.

The other school objects to memorizing because it not only "gives in itself no knowledge, but is in a sense a barrier to knowledge," "not a help, but a hindrance," and they especially object to memorizing church catechisms.

As usual in such cases, both are right, provided each is modified by the other; for the extreme statements, though possible, are rarely realized in actual life. As one has said: "The memorizing is all right. The failure to explain what is memorized is all wrong."

Let us get clear ideas on this subject.

1. As a rule, it is of little value to memorize the words of long historical passages, as was once the custom in Sunday Schools. Through such memorizing it is possible, although extremely rare, to have such instances as that of the well-attested case of "Blind Alec" of Scotland, a man "of mature years, and of average intelligence, who had committed to memory the words of the entire Bible. For years he had been in the daily habit of recalling and reciting passages of Scripture thus memorized. Yet he was ignorant of every truth or fact in the Bible. His great

memorizing of words had been no help to him in the gaining of truth."

What should be memorized is not the words, but the general ideas and movements, of history.

2. It is also true that memorizing the words of a mathematical demonstration is a hindrance to learning mathematics, and is the worst possible way of studying them. "There is a well-authenticated instance of a student who actually learned the six books of Euclid by heart, though he could not tell the difference between an angle and a triangle."

What should abide in the memory is the process of reasoning.

3. There is little use, perhaps sometimes a real injury, in committing to memory anything entirely disconnected from the ideas the words express, anything ungeared to previous knowledge or experience. It is like storing seeds in a warehouse, where, though they fill it to the roof and endure for ages, they can never produce fruits or flowers.

4. But it should be remembered that this rarely occurs; for in most cases of memory work, even of catechisms, and much more of the best Scripture truths, there is some connection with previous knowledge or with life. It is not necessary that any truth should be fully comprehended, but only that there should be an open door into it, some ray of real meaning although that meaning reaches to heaven, some thread of attachment to the needs of the soul. The seeds planted thus in the soil of the mind are likely to germinate at some time. And this is the usual experience; certainly in almost all cases beyond the Primary Department. I believe you will find a thousand

cases of injury from the failure to commit enough Scripture to memory, to one where committing to memory has done harm, if committing choice Scripture truths ever does harm.

Ruskin was taught not only to read the Bible daily, but to learn a few verses by heart each day. "It might be beyond me altogether; that she did not care about; but she made sure that as soon as I got hold of it at all, I should get hold of it by the right end. It is strange that of all the pieces of the Bible that my mother thus taught me, that which cost me most to learn, and which was to my child's mind most repulsive, — Psalm 119 — has now become of all the most precious to me in its overflowing and glorious passion of love for the law of God."<sup>1</sup> And he expresses the utmost gratitude to his mother for the "consistent lessons which so exercised me in the Scriptures as to make every word of them familiar to my ear in habitual music — yet in that familiarity revered, as transcending all thought, and ordaining all conduct." If I were to live my life over again, I would learn much more by heart than I did in my youth, — the best hymns, the choicest passages from the poets and other literature, and especially the most surpassing spiritual, life-giving, and life-guarding portions of Holy Scripture. There are no better companions, no better teachers, than an intimate communion with the best people, the best thoughts, the most glorious truths in the world. I cannot tell you how much of an educating power has been what little I did learn. The best and richest words and thoughts continually in the mind become channels for our own thoughts to flow in, till they become a second nature.

<sup>1</sup> *Præterita.*

“Those are never alone who are accompanied by noble thoughts.”<sup>1</sup>

“Recollection is the only Paradise from which we cannot be turned out.”<sup>2</sup>

“A Land of Promise, a land of memory,  
A Land of Promise flowing with the milk  
And honey of delicious memories.”<sup>3</sup>

Out of Delphi came the oracle, “If the Athenians desire good citizens, let them put whatsoever is most beautiful into the ears of their sons.”

So they put into their ears golden earrings, as the Jews wear phylacteries.

But Pericles told them that the oracle meant jewels of thought set in words of gold.

The teacher has done the best neither for himself nor for the pupils under his care, unless he first fills his own mind, and then the memories of his pupils, with the most precious passages of the Bible, so that he and they can go through life accompanied by a host of angelic truths which fill the atmosphere around him like the angel faces in Raphael’s Sistine Madonna.

“Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.”<sup>4</sup>

**VI. The Magnet Method.** — Under this head I wish to present some of the time-saving and labor-saving methods of enriching your Bible studies, which, from long experience and necessity, I have found most helpful in gathering about the Bible for easiest and most effective use

<sup>1</sup> Sidney.

<sup>2</sup> Richter.

<sup>3</sup> Tennyson.

<sup>4</sup> Paul.

the great mass of materials which present themselves from day to day.

Dr. Holmes, in the *Autocrat of the Breakfast Table*, represents the Divinity-student at the table as saying, after listening to one of the doctor's famous illustrations,—  
“There is no power I envy so much as that of seeing analogies and making comparisons. I don't understand how it is that some minds are continually coupling thoughts or objects that seem not in the least related to each other, until all at once they are put in a certain light, and you wonder that you did not always see that they were as like as a pair of twins. It appears to me as a sort of miraculous gift.” “You call it *miraculous!*” Then the doctor pictures a man by the ocean with a tin cup taking up a gill of sea-water, “and you call the tin cup a miraculous possession! It is the ocean that is miraculous, my infant apostle!” Then, picturing all the fancies that poetry has dreamed or humanity has felt, he goes on to say “the Epic which held them all, though its letters filled the zodiac, would be but a cupful from the infinite ocean of similitudes and analogies that rolls through the universe.”

Almost the same may be said of literature, and of life of which literature is the expression. Not only from books, but from the weekly papers, religious and secular, from magazines of almost all kinds, scientific, secular, literary, educational, and Biblical, there flock, like doves to their windows, thoughts, facts, illustrations, explorations, to the reader of the Bible.

“Come and wander with me,  
Into regions yet untrod,  
And read what is still unread  
In the Manuscripts of God.”

After trying almost every conceivable way of utilizing these things, I have settled down upon certain methods as the most helpful to me, and therefore probably to the teacher and minister.

1. Use the margins of your Bible for noting references to illustrations or facts in the books you read, putting the name of the book and the page opposite to the verse on which it throws light, also marking the passage in the book itself, if the book is your own. It is quite an advantage to own the books you read, on account of this privilege of marking them, and also noting on the blank leaves the marked pages which throw especial light on the Bible.

For instance, in one of my Bibles I find on the margin against Exodus 12 : 3, "borrowed," "see Trumbull's *Oriental Social Life*, p. 319, etc.," and on the next chapter a reference to his *Kadesh-barnea*, the best help in understanding the route of the exodus. I turn again to Matthew 27 : 36, and find recorded opposite it "Sidney Lanier's Poems, *A Ballad of Trees and the Master*"; against Matthew 23 : 29, "Lowell's *Essays on Dante*, p. 141"; at Matthew 24 : 36, 37, "Kidd's *Social Evolution*, p. 134, Lecky's *History of European Morals*, I, 359"; against Mark 6 : 3, "Browning's Poems, *The Boy and the Angel*, p. 256"; opposite "under the shadow of his wings," Psalm 17 : 8, I would write "Bowl of Præneste," to remind me of that beautiful illustration in a series around the rim of that famous bowl from Southern Italy, which was told me by a learned man, and which I can find pictured and described in some volume of my Notes. In this way there is a very helpful correlation between the literature we read and the Bible.

2. Another method is quite as helpful in some ways and requires less time. I have always great reason to



be thankful to Mr. Joseph C. Thomas, of The Methodist Book Concern, New York, for showing me, several years ago, among his many ingenious plans for libraries, his Index Bible. It consists simply of heavy manilla-paper files, folded thrice in a kind of open envelope, one for each book of the Bible. The name of the book is placed on four corners, so that, however it is put in the bookcase, it is easy to find the book you want. These are placed on a shelf close to my desk, and into them are put cuttings of all kinds that illustrate any particular text, marking the chapter and verse on the cutting, and, at first, putting on the outside of each envelope the chapter and verse to which there was a reference. But this became too burdensome. I have also been inclined of late to use this Index Bible for references to literature, simply noting down the book, the page, and the point illustrated, on a slip of paper and placing it in the folded envelope to which it belongs. It is perfectly simple for any one to make these folders out of heavy manilla or leather board to be found at bookbinders'.

I have found it useful to make a distinction between illustrations of subjects, and those that add some knowledge to particular verses. The latter I put in my Index Bible; the illustrations I simply throw into a drawer without classification, because in many cases the same illustration will fit several related subjects; and it is good once in a while to run through the whole list, both to sift them, and to become acquainted with the contents of the drawer.

3. There is a use of magazine articles which is a great improvement over the old way of keeping them in yearly bundles stored away in some odd corner of the house. I

found this way almost entirely useless for Bible helps. Even binding them was not much more convenient. It took too long to find the articles on any particular subject. There are continually coming out long articles by biblical experts and explorers in Bible lands, which are more thorough than commentaries can be, and later than most books on the subjects of which they treat. These articles I cut out and placed in home-made folders like those of the Index Bible, marked with the names of the books of the Bible, and also with two or three other subjects, such as Education, the Sunday School. Thus everything on any book of the Bible is ready for immediate use.

4. The card catalogue can be used with great advantage; not for cataloguing the books in one's own library, for though that library may mount up into several thousands, one ought to be so acquainted with it as to know how to put his hand upon any book on any particular subject; but for keeping up a knowledge of the best books of the past, and of those that are continually being issued.

The most difficult part of my work has been to know what there is, all there is, and the best there is, on everything pertaining to the Bible. By watching the book notices and cutting them out, by studying not only the great libraries, but every minister's library you can reach, and by conversing with experts as you meet them, and then putting the results on the cards of an ordinary card catalogue arrangement, under each book of the Bible, subdivided as often as may be convenient, you will soon have a knowledge of the chief literature on the Bible available for buying or research in the great libraries.

**VII. Studying the Bible in Different Versions and Languages.** — While comparatively few Sunday School teach-

ers can make an exhaustive study of the Bible, which is the work of a lifetime and more, yet while they are passing through life it is well to make the best use of the opportunities they have. The hours of lesson study, the times of devotional reading, the seasons of family prayers, may be rendered more effective and more interesting by studying and reading the Scriptures in a variety of ways. This is especially true of family prayers, which give the characteristic atmosphere to the family, and through social reading gives an especially good opportunity to gain the advantage which comes from reading in different versions and in as many languages as he can understand.

**The advantage** of reading various versions arises from the fact that some of the Hebrew and Greek words have no exact synonyms in English. The words do not cover exactly the same territory. For instance, a Greek word is translated "power" in the Authorized, and "authority" in the Revisions. But both meanings are included in the Greek word, and neither version gives the full meaning. So "patience" in "tribulation worketh patience," is translated "steadfastness" in the American Revision, emphasizing endurance while "patience" emphasizes the burden, but the Greek word includes both meanings.

Thus every translation, however perfect, comes short of giving the whole meaning. In the words of Professor Henry M. Whitney:—

"While all translation, outside of science or other exact knowledge, is difficult and in some sense impossible, the translation of the Bible is one of the most difficult things to which the hand of man has ever been set. The best-qualified can achieve it only imperfectly, and, almost while they are printing their version, new discoveries come to

make them regret some decision, and the English language has shifted a little, so that some word that fitted exactly now fits no more. . . . No translator is perfect or makes a perfect work; there are always words and passages that are open to doubt; the terms of no language exactly cover those of another.

“Hebrew is probably as different from English as any other language, living or dead. It is dead, and dead in a far distant past. . . . Imagine a language having no present tense, no perfect, no imperfect, no pluperfect, no future-perfect, no subjunctive, no optative, no infinitive! . . . Its prepositions often put one into painful perplexity as to which, among the delicately differentiated English prepositions, is the one that ought to be used. . . .

“Hence the cases are frequent where there is a wide range of possible translation: many of these are noted in the margin of the English Revision (that of 1885), and still more in that of the recent American Revision, but a still larger proportion are left unmarked.”

Hence the advantage of different versions which enable us to see the truth from several points of view.

Again, there is in each translation a somewhat different atmosphere arising from the temperament or circumstances of the translators, or the purpose they have in view, whether to meet the views of the scholarly, as in the English and American Revisions, or to reach and attract the general reader, as in the *Twentieth Century New Testament*.

Moreover, there is a wide difference in the literary arrangement, in the paragraphing, in verses, in numbering the verses, in the forms of printing poetry, and even deciding what is poetry, in the arrangement of the dramatic

portions, and dialogues, in the divisions into chapters and sections, in the printing of quotations from the Old Testament.

We will take a brief glance at some of the modern versions and forms in which the Bible is presented to us.

1. **The Authorized Version** of 1611, in which most of our Bibles in common use are presented. No other English version has equalled it in the perfection of its style and the beauty and nobility of its language. More than any other book or books has the common English Bible been the maker of the best English prose. "It is written in the noblest and purest English, and abounds in exquisite beauties of a merely literary form." "It lives on the ear like a music that can never be forgotten." "Because of its grandeur and its beauty it has a wonderful spell for the heart; it still rings in the heart like the peal of remembered bells."

2. **The Revised Version** of 1881 and 1885, by a selection of the best scholars in Great Britain and America, a monument of exact scholarship, surpassing the Authorized in its fidelity to the originals, and with a more correct text from which to translate, but not so musical and perfect in its English. But Dr. Curry, the President of the School of Expression, says that "with practice and familiarity in reading it aloud the sense of its imperfection disappears, and the reader will soon grow to feel its superiority over the Authorized Version."

3. **The American Revision** of 1901, in which are incorporated the changes desired by the American section of the Revision Committee, but rejected by the English section; together with such other changes as the American Committee after long and careful study deemed it wise to

make. On the whole a decided improvement on the Revision of 1881 and 1885.

These are the three most important English versions. While it is true that the two later versions have made not a few decided improvements, and have corrected some real errors, and are nearer to the original Greek than the Authorized, yet these later versions have not become popular reading, and few are being sold annually compared with the immense sales of the common version. At two very large Bible publishing houses I was told that only about 5 per cent of the Bibles sold were of the Revisions, and 95 per cent were the Authorized.

It is well to look the reasons for this squarely in the face, so that something may be done toward a remedy.

**First**, — to begin with the lesser reasons, — the difference between the versions is not sufficiently great, in the opinion of ordinary readers, to cause them to put away the Bibles they have been using, and all go over together to the new; which they would need to do, because in all public responsive use it is very confusing to have different texts. No great doctrine or truth is changed by the changes in the new versions.

**Second**. The old version is familiar, much of it learned by heart, in musical English, and there is a natural hesitation before choosing a different version, less perfect in these ways, so long as they can correct the old by using the new for sidelights and necessary changes.

**Third**. There are some changes in those passages which have been long used almost as liturgies, which seem unnecessary and are very trying. Professor Whitney thinks that the change in the Lord's Prayer from the large range of "Deliver us from evil" to the narrow "Deliver us

from the evil one" has been one of the serious obstacles to the popular acceptance of the new versions. I would add the leaving out of the benediction from the Lord's Prayer; and the taking away a large part of the power and blessing of the Christmas song of the angels in Luke, by changes in the translation due to a single letter in one word of the Greek. It would not have required much of a strain on the principles of the translators to have put all these changes in the margin, and let these and other liturgical portions remain as they were.

**Fourth.** There is a strong feeling that we have not yet reached the final Revision, and this is confirmed by the issue of the American Revision, and of the several versions described below, besides many tentative versions of individual books. Hence the great expense of a general change will not be likely to be incurred. The two kinds are not easily used together, nor will they be till some change is made in the form in which they are printed.

**Fifth.** The one great hindrance to the general popular acceptance of the Revisions lies in the exceedingly cumbersome and solid method of paragraphing, rendering them difficult of use for many purposes, and repellent to the popular mind, as well as to many scholars. If Shakespeare were paragraphed in the same solid way, even the dialogues and conversations being run together in solid form, he would lose half his readers. A large part of the fascination of the *Twentieth Century New Testament*, and of Lasserre's Gospels in French, — which created so much enthusiasm in France that the Pope retracted his permission for its circulation, — is created by their almost perfect paragraphing.

The verse numbers on the margins of the Revision are

some relief. The verse numbers in the text of the American Revision are more opposed to what is sought by paragraphing than is even the old versification. The printing of the Psalms and all poetry in poetic forms is a great gain. But on the whole, the verse form of the old version is preferred by most people, not because it is useful for proof texts, as one man says, nor for the convenience of commentators, as Professor Moulton says, but because it is so convenient for reference, so open faced to read, so helpful in responsive reading, in the public service and in the family, so referred to in thousands of books, so attractive in form as to far overbear any gain from the solid paragraphing, which can easily be retained in some other way.

It was a pleasure to find that Professor Henry M. Whitney, now Librarian at Northampton, Massachusetts, has expressed the same feeling in a series of enlightening articles in the *Bibliotheca Sacra*, which I hope will appear in book form, for they are the best literary discussion of the various revisions and translations I have seen. He says: "In this respect the English Committee certainly made a grave mistake. It was here that they were expected to make one of their greatest improvements, — an improvement for which the way had been prepared by the paragraph Bibles; and yet dismay is hardly too strong a word for the effect of their changes upon the public mind. A paragraph to a verse, as in the Authorized Version, was not right, of course; but a paragraph to a page or more was a great deal worse. The translator who wishes to make the Bible interesting to those who are not scholars, whether young or old, will make as many paragraphs as the matter will bear: the best proof of this is to watch



such persons turning over books to find one that 'looks interesting,' and deciding which to try by the openness of the page. The long paragraphs of the English Revision were a distinct loss to the hold of the Bible upon the mass of the English-speaking peoples; the American Committee have come part way back to the attractiveness of the Authorized Version in this respect.

"Taking at random the first five chapters of Acts, we find that the English and the American Revisers make the same number of paragraphs, besides the poetry, — twenty-two in all: but that the *Twentieth Century New Testament* makes fifty-one, besides frequently using Herbert Spencer's device of the sub-paragraph, or a break of half an inch in a line. It is easy to tell which of the three bodies of translators are by their work the most skilful fishers for men. It is a good thing for a translator, a scholar, to work from the standpoint of the tenderness, the condescension, of Christ."

In conversing with Mr. Frowde, the head of the Oxford University Press, I asked him why he did not print the Revision in a better-paragraphed form, like the *Twentieth Century New Testament*. He replied that he had long wanted to print an edition in verse form, but the Revisers were unwilling to have it done.

The time is coming when there will be a paragraphed Bible which will contain the advantages of all the systems. Whatever publisher shall accomplish this with the Revisions will do more to increase their circulation than all other influences combined.

In our prayer meeting and Sunday School we supply for general use a versified form of the Revision (1881 to 1885), and it makes little clashing with those who bring

the Authorized Version with them. And whatever publisher shall put the Authorized Version in the best-paragraphed form, as finely paragraphed as possible, but making the verse references as easy as in the common form, will be on the way to a fortune.

4. **Holman's Interlinear Parallel Bible** is an ingenious but simple method of presenting the two versions in such a way that the differences are seen at a glance. The work is done with great technical excellence, and with a carefulness which notes the most minute variations.

It is very handy for use in the study, in the home, or in the class. Professor George E. Day of Yale University commends it as a means of obtaining most promptly, and with the least labor, a comprehensive and at the same time particular view of the agreement on the one hand and the differences on the other between the so-called Authorized English translation of the Bible and the more accurate renderings adopted by the Anglo-American Revision Committee.

5. **The Modern Reader's Bible** is the Revised Version arranged and paragraphed in such a manner as to make that version very attractive and readable. It is published in a series of small volumes, in plain, but neat binding, and each book of the Bible has a most enlightening and suggestive introduction by Professor Moulton. This Bible is one of the most helpful now in existence for private reading. It is difficult to use at family prayers, or in any social way, because there is nothing in the text to connect it with the chapters and verses of the common version.

I only wish there was an edition as beautifully bound as the Temple Bible, and with headings referring to the Authorized Version's chapters and verses. Then the

whole set, or particular volumes of it, would be an attractive present for Christmas and other times.

6. **The Temple Bible**, also in small volumes, is the Authorized Version finely paragraphed, with introductions from the higher critical standpoint, with notes, Biblical references in English literature, and other helps. Each volume is beautifully bound in the same form as the charming Temple Shakespeare. One difficulty in using it with other translations is that the connection with the Authorized Version is noted only at the head of each page.

7. **The Twentieth Century New Testament** is a new translation from the Greek into modern English, presented in modern form, fully paragraphed, with indented headings. It puts the Gospels in so attractive a form that one reads it with the charm of a story-book or drama. It is the best paragraphed of all the English versions.

The translation is by twenty Greek scholars in England and is remarkably well done, except that sometimes it fails in dignity, and uses trivial words by preference, where nobler words would have been equally understood by all.

“In this translation not only every word, but also the emphasis placed upon every word, has been carefully weighed, and an effort made to give the exact force and meaning in modern English.” “The reception given to this version shows not only that its serious intent has been recognized, but that, in some degree at least, it meets a want that is felt.”

It can often be made very attractive in a class, and will interest them like a story-book, as no verse form and no solid paragraphing can do.

“To quote a case in point; lately a copy of this *Twentieth Century New Testament* was missing and it was found that a servant had carried it away to read in the kitchen. When she handed it back she remarked, ‘I have never seen it so plain before.’”

8. **The New Testament in Modern Speech**, an idiomatic translation into everyday English, by Headmaster Richard F. Weymouth, edited by E. Hampden Cook, M.A. (England).

This is a sincere attempt to make the New Testament attractive to the common people, in order that “the common people may still hear the ‘Gospel gladly,’ because intelligently, and because not shrouded in a tone which is now to them out of date. What Luther wrote in 1534 is surely true to-day, and may his longing be ours, ‘That the husbandman should sing portions to himself as he follows the plough . . . and the Scriptures be read by the clown and mechanic.’”

It has many good points and choice translations. But its paragraphing is too solid (even its conversations are run together) for it ever to be popular to those for whom it was intended. If the editor, who was one of the translators of the *Twentieth Century New Testament*, should paragraph it like that translation, it would add greatly to its usefulness, and aid the cause for which it was made.

9. **The Modern American Bible**, The Books of the Bible in Modern English for American Readers, by the Rev. Frank Schell Ballentine, Scranton, Pennsylvania. Revised edition. This has the same purpose as the Weymouth-Cook translation: to be an idiomatic translation into “Modern American” form and phrase. The new edition leaves unchanged all those portions which have

become so familiar as to be almost liturgical in use and in love, as the Lord's prayer, and all the hymns in the first chapters of Luke. The work is well done, and deserves high praise. But though better paragraphed than the *English New Testament in Modern Speech*, it still lacks much, in that direction, of its possibilities for popular use.

10. **The New Testament in Modern English**, by Ferrar Fenton, M.C.A.A. (London). This has many of the qualities belonging to Numbers 8 and 9, but is not so well known.

None of the versions by individuals, or by a self-chosen company, however useful for other purposes, can ever take the place of authoritative Versions made by the widest range of scholarship in the English-speaking countries.

11. **Bibles for children**, in which are omitted those portions of Scripture which are not adapted to children, and not written for them, nor interesting to them. These find their best use in families where there are small children, for reading on Sundays and at family prayers, and for bed-time stories.

12. **Translations of separate books**, such as the Polychrome Bible, of which only Joshua, Judges, Psalms, Isaiah, and Ezekiel are out in English; various translations of the Psalms, of Job, of Isaiah, and other books; Delitzsch's New Testament in Hebrew.

13. **Polyglot Bibles**, such as the *Polyglotten-Bibel* in five volumes. The Old Testament is given in Hebrew, Greek, Latin, and German, in parallel columns; the New Testament in Greek, Latin, and German. The *Parallel New Testament in Greek and English*. The Greek is the text followed in the Revised Version, and the English in two

versions, the Authorized and Revised, all in parallel columns, with one column for references and for writing notes in a fuller way than even the wide margin Bibles allow.

**14. Diatessarons of the Gospels.** — The Diatessaron (made from four), called also Monotessaron (four in one), consists of the Four Gospels, woven into one continuous narrative. The earliest is Tatian's Diatessaron, about 170 A.D. There are many others. While for ordinary reading the Gospel narrative in its four separate forms is by far the best arrangement, and Macaulay asks, "Who would lose in the confusion of a Diatessaron the peculiar charm which belongs to the narrative of the disciple whom Jesus loved?" yet its occasional use at home or in the class will give to many the experience which Amos R. Wells in his excellent *Sunday School Success* records as his own: "It has given the life and person of Christ marvelous vividness, setting facts in their due order, location, relations, and proportions, while the facility it affords is constant inspiration to fresh, delightful study. . . . Not only every Sunday School teacher, but every Bible scholar, should own one."

**The Ideal Bible Version.** — All these Bible versions are tentative; they are preparing the way for something better; they are "the multitude of counsellors" through whom is "safety" and "wise guidance"; they are the foundations on which shall be built the ideal version which will abide for many generations, and for which the present generation is waiting.

(1) The Ideal Version will be made as were the Authorized and the two great Revisions, by a large number of persons selected for their especial fitness for this work.

But they will be selected from a wider field, including the very best scholars in English as well as in Hebrew and Greek, and some of those few who have the gift of stating the greatest truths in the best popular language, and some of true poetic feeling who can give the charm of the most perfect musical rhythm to the words.

(2) It will first be issued in tentative form, in order to have the light which the whole English world can cast upon it before it is put into its permanent form.

(3) It will embody all the best that has been gained by all previous versions.

(4) It will embody the very best scholarship, but will be made so that the common people will understand it, be attracted to it, and love it. It will be a Bible for children and the home.

(5) It will be so paragraphed and arranged as to embody the best of all literary forms. It will be better paragraphed than the *Twentieth Century New Testament*. It will contain the larger subject paragraphs of the Revisions. It will embody all the conveniences for general use now employed in the verse and chapter arrangement of the Authorized Version. It will make it easy to recognize the present arrangement of chapter and verse, to which all literature for more than a thousand years is adapted.

## XI

### SUNDAY SCHOOL ROOMS AND EQUIPMENT

ONE of the strongest motives which induced me to undertake the writing of this book has been the desire to promote to the uttermost of my ability a wider knowledge and more extensive use of the best rooms, the best apparatus, and the best general equipment for the Sunday School work. There is hardly a Sunday School I visit, even the best, the most up-to-date ones, but could easily make decided improvements if they knew what some other schools are doing. And most schools have something they can teach to others.

I continually observe the building of large and expensive churches in cultured communities, which provide everything most beautiful, most helpful, and most convenient for the adult worshippers; but not only fail to give the children that come to the church comfortable seats, where their feet can reach the floor, but give far from equal accommodations for the Sunday School and the children and the adults that attend the Sunday School service.

I do not know whether this is due to a want of knowledge of what is best and of what others in like circumstances are doing, or to a lack of realization of its value and necessity.

When, only ten or twelve years ago, it was proposed to



transform the outgrown chapel and Sunday School rooms in a beautiful and cultured suburb of Boston, not one in our church was found, except Rev. Dr. F. E. Clark and myself, who had even seen one of the modern model Sunday School rooms. It is but a few years since there was but one such building, so far as I know, in the whole state of Massachusetts. The number is gradually increasing, and many more are approximating it, being modified by the idea; and in many parts of the country the number is growing with comparative rapidity, and most large, new churches are influenced by the plan.

The elder Dr. Tyng was right when, in a public address in Henry Ward Beecher's Church, he said: "For years, if the choice before me in my work as a pastor has been between one child and two adults, I have always been ready to take the child. It seems to me that the Devil would never ask anything more of a minister than to have him feel that his mission was chiefly to the grown-up members of his congregation, while some one else was to look after the children." Then, pointing to the main entrance of the Plymouth Church auditorium, he continued, with that peculiar intensity of his: "I can see the Devil looking in at that door, and saying to the minister on this platform, 'Now you just stand there and fire away at the old folks, and I'll go around and steal away the little ones,—as the Indians steal ducks, swimming under them, catching them by the legs, and pulling them under.'"<sup>1</sup>

I do not mean that the church edifice, which is for all, both old and young, should not be more beautiful, more

<sup>1</sup> See the whole dramatic story, as told by H. C. Trumbull in his *Yale Lectures on the Sunday School*.

expensive, more adapted to cultured tastes than the Sunday School rooms, but that these latter should be as perfectly adapted to the work to be done in them as the Church is for its purposes. No Church can afford to neglect in any degree the best training for the young, who are to become the Church of the future.

The best machinery for its purpose in the whole world should be that which enables religious education to accomplish its purposes. More rapid than the improvement of all methods and means for carrying on the business of the world should be the improvement in the means of education; and swifter than the progress of school buildings and apparatus for the day schools should be the progress in Sunday School buildings, and all the aids to teaching the Bible and training children for the Kingdom of God.

The heart, the soul of the Sunday School is the teaching, — the teacher, the persons taught, and the lesson taught. There is no limit to what this soul of the Sunday School can become and can do under any circumstances, however adverse.

But it does make a difference in what kind of a body this soul lives, whether the body is the best instrument for the soul's activities, or whether the soul must be hampered and hindered by using its energy in contending against weakness and sickness and pain, bad food, and imperfect senses.

There have, indeed, been saints in lonely deserts and in the very purlieus of sin. There have been souls of the greatest usefulness and power in feeble, pain-racked, bed-ridden bodies. Marvellous works have been accomplished by the blind, which few with seeing eyes could have done. These facts go — like the strains of music heard in war-

time, thrilling the soldiers' hospital — through this weary world, singing songs of comfort, of hope, of triumph, to those who cannot have the best, who are distracted with care, wrestling with poverty, burdened with infirmities.

“O ye beneath Life's crushing load,  
Whose forms are bending low,  
Who toil along the climbing way,  
With painful steps and slow!  
Look now, for glad and golden hours  
Come swiftly on the wing;  
O rest beside the weary road,  
And hear (*these*) angels sing.”

But the bass to this triumphal air is that only the soul that does its level best with what it has can join in that song; that whosoever rests content with the poorest instrument when a better is within its power, is not fit to do the best under disadvantages, fails in the very power by which triumph can be won. A great musician can produce fine music on a common violin; but he that uses such a one when he can have a Stradivarius proves not only that he is a fool, but that he is not a good musician.

Now this is a fitting parable for the Church and the Sunday School. It is a chorus of angels singing songs of cheer, of encouragement, of deliverance from the Slough of Despond, to the numberless churches and Sunday Schools who are doing God's work in the midst of poverty and scanty numbers, contending with every disadvantage. For whatever belongs to spiritual preparation — the Bible, the Gospel, the Holy Spirit, the Kingship of Jesus, the power of the Grace of God — is always theirs. With these they can do magnificent work for the Kingdom of God, in rude schoolhouses, in barns, in hovels, in the

wilderness, in prisons, as has been done over and over again in the history of the Church.

But *never* when it could have had better instruments, never when the world was first and religion second, never when it builds beautiful houses for itself and lets the church and Sunday School buildings decay.

The spirit that uses the latest machinery in its factories, but the old and worn-out for its churches and Sunday School, is not the spirit that can triumph over disadvantages, or do good work anywhere. It signals its own defeat. David slew Goliath with a sling, but he that should undertake to-day to capture Fort Arthur or Gibraltar with David's sling would simply show his want of patriotism and tell the world that he is not even a soldier.

**The Situation.** — There are two kinds of *Sunday School buildings*, from this point of view, —

The old and the new.            Or rather,  
The old and those about to come into being.

There are two kinds of *Sunday Schools*, —

The small and the large.

There are two kinds of *communities*, —

The wealthy and the poor.

There are endless degrees and combinations of these. All these six things must be considered in deciding what is best in any given case.

Mr. Ruskin is right when he contends that the public buildings — the church, the schoolhouse, the library — should be the best, the most beautiful, the most expensive buildings in any community. The church buildings should tower in quality above all business blocks, all

houses, as does its heaven-pointed spire, because they are for all, because they symbolize the highest, the noblest, the most important influences in the community, and because the recognition of these is an educating power.

**The Sunday School room and its equipment in a wealthy community** should be as complete and perfect as wealth and talent can make them.

1. Because they express the comparative value which the community sets upon religion and upon religious education and upon the training of the children.

2. They are an "ideal made real" toward which all less-favored communities can grow; from which they can take whatever of good is within their power, or adapt them in less expensive ways to their needs. Thus they become "a city set on a hill."

Every community can take to heart some words spoken concerning one of the noblest characters in *Stephanie the Uncrowned*: "From boyhood he had had an object and an ideal. If every man and woman started in life thus armed, there would be surely less sin, less sorrow, in the world. It matters little what that ideal be, if only it partake of the nature of an aspiration, a soaring upwards! It may be impossible of realization, a thing which an ordinary human being would not recognize as feasible; nevertheless it will suffice to save that human soul alive; to prevent it from drifting into utter darkness."

3. By this means those who contemplate new buildings can make them as near the ideals as means and disposition will allow. The well-known Akron Sunday School rooms, the first made on this modern plan, have influenced the church and Sunday School architecture throughout a wide region, if not the whole country.

4. In the case of old and established buildings, it may not be feasible in some cases to remodel them, but there are almost none which cannot be improved at small expense, and made more convenient, more adapted to their purpose, by simple devices, and by various means of equipment, such as will be described below. Many of them can be home made.

5. The rooms and general arrangements need to be quite different for large schools from those which are best for small schools, though rather by additions than by changes of principle. As a rule, too large a number in any one room is a disadvantage, and renders it more difficult to keep order. The President of the Teachers College of Columbia University told me that one great difficulty in some of the large New York Sunday Schools was that the boys who in a day school with fifty in a room behave well are almost sure to be more disorderly and more difficult to control where five hundred are in a room together.

**Exhibits** are a most important factor in every Sunday School Convention, but it is a difficult and laborious work to collect a complete and satisfactory exhibit for each one, or for even the annual State Conventions.

But it is possible for the State Associations to gather gradually such an exhibit at its headquarters. It will contain plans and samples of everything that pertains to the ideal Sunday School, so that whoever wishes to know what there is, or to gain hints for his own school, can find the best that is known.

Plans of the best schools will gladly be sent by the architects. The publishers will send copies of their books and periodicals. The map makers will send maps and

charts, those who publish pictures will put them on exhibition. Makers of tables, kindergarten materials, blackboards, will send samples. Every kind of book on the Sunday School, on pedagogy, on child study, can be collected. The Sunday Schools will send specimens of their map work, picture and written lives of Christ, examination papers.

The only instance of such an exhibit of which I am aware is that of the Sunday School Commission of the Diocese of New York, at 29 Lafayette Place, under the charge of Rev. William Walter Smith, M.A., M.D. This embraces over nine thousand articles, and was sent to the R. E. A. Convention at Philadelphia and to the Episcopal General Convention at Trinity Church, Boston.

Whatever exhibit is prepared for the State Sunday School Associations should be lent, in whole or in part, wherever desired, and its teachings be made known as widely as possible.

### MODEL SUNDAY SCHOOL BUILDINGS

**The Akron Plan.** — Almost simultaneously with the adoption of the International Lessons, there naturally arose out of the same earnest desire to improve the Sunday School, a deep and growing interest in the grading of the classes and the teaching. But the development of the graded system was, and still is, greatly hampered by the want of buildings and rooms especially adapted to the purpose.

No adequate building existed till about 1866, when an idea which has created a revolution in Sunday School architecture, sprang out of the fertile brain of Mr. Lewis Miller, the financial founder of the Chautauqua Movement, as Bishop Vincent was the educational founder.

The Sunday School Superintendent put into his Sunday School work all his business ability, and that inventive power by which he put three hundred and twenty of his own patented appliances into a single one of his great reaping machines. He was testing that machine on the very day I arrived at his house to spend a Sunday at Akron, to study the only ideal Sunday School building then in the world; and putting the great reaper and the model Sunday School together, I thanked God for the consecrated talents of a business man, who will be remembered longer for his Sunday School than by his business ingenuity. He secured the services of Jacob Snyder, an architect of Akron, and the result was the Sunday School rooms of the first M. E. Church of that city.

**Several examples** of this general plan are given below to show how widely it can be adapted to differing conditions and circumstances. The original Akron building is in general like the following cut, except that a balcony is in front of the class rooms instead of the foyer in the rear, and there are no sliding doors between the Sunday School rooms and the church auditorium.

*B.* Rotunda, for the intermediate grades.

*C.* Class rooms, each one named after some mission.

*T.* Balcony.

*W.* Kindergarten and primary rooms, larger than the class rooms.

*J.* Vestibules.

*E.* Library.

It will be noticed that the partitions of the class rooms all radiate from the superintendent's desk, so that he can be seen and heard by every one in all the rooms.

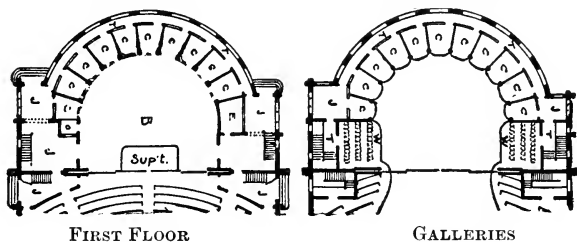
There are two stories of class rooms, the upper one with



a balcony in front, into or toward which the scholars can come for the devotional exercises. The singing is bettered by this forward movement of the class. The class rooms make an excellent and definite distinction between the lower grades and the senior and adult grades, as well as between the primary and the intermediate grades.

The main room is lighted from above, either by a dome or skylight or by clerestory windows at the top of the room.

**A Modified Akron Plan.** — “The necessity of maintaining the Sunday School as an auxiliary of the church and as a part of the church service, suggested the necessity of maintaining the various services in one building, providing departments for the accommodation of each, and for the purpose of accommodating audiences varying in num-



An “Akron” Sunday School room, at rear of auditorium “in combination.” Note the omission of balcony, and the Foyer passage to class rooms from rear. This plan is reproduced by the kind permission of George W. Kramer, Architect, No. 1 Madison Avenue, New York.

bers, so locating the rooms and connecting them that they might reinforce each other to their full capacity. This principle of advantage — first suggested by Mr. Miller — soon assumed tangible form and resulted in the now popular combination church, which has been developed in many forms.”

The Sunday School rooms are separated from the church auditorium by large sliding doors, so that on special occasions the audience room can be almost doubled.

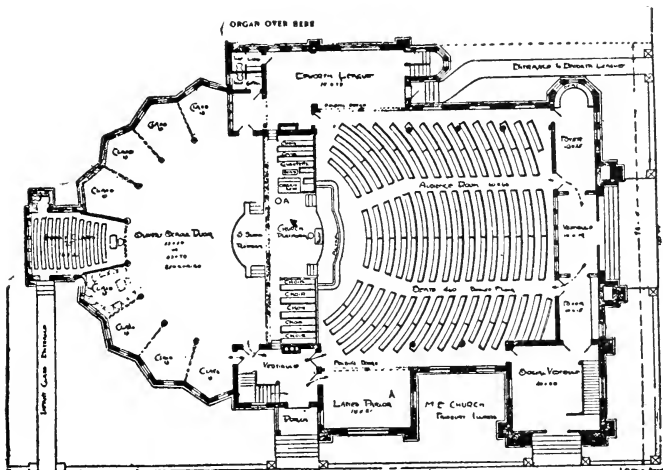
Changing the balcony from the front to the back of the class rooms, brings the scholars in them closer to the superintendent without changing the seats. It also enables the class rooms to be entered without disturbing the rest of the school. The Sunday School rooms by this arrangement are not so good as an audience room for lectures, socials, stereopticon, and other purposes. But this arrangement is not an essential part of the combination plan.

The combination plan has many advantages, especially for small or medium-sized churches.

Examples of this general plan may be seen in many places. For instance, in the large and beautiful First Baptist Church at Malden, Massachusetts, and for a charming small church, the Congregational Church in Wellesley Hills, near Boston.

**Another form of the combination plan** is one "with which Lawrence B. Valk, of Los Angeles, California, is identified. Among the interesting churches built on this plan is a new church in Detroit, Michigan. It cost \$20,000. It is on a lot 110 × 150, and built of pressed brick and stone trimmings. It can be said that these churches are started with the idea of a distinctly church effect. Mr. Valk says, 'I have been guilty of designing many of these auditoriums where the pulpit is located in the corner, but it is impossible to get a reverent appearance with a corner pulpit.' In these new plans the interior is based on the form of a cross with nave and transept. The platform is so located that the speaker commands the

Sunday School as well as the church. On the platform is a rood screen with sliding panels. It stands from 12 to 18 feet high, dividing the church from the Sunday School.



This plan and description is furnished by the *Church Economist*, 31 Union Square, New York, the most suggestive paper I have ever seen for working plans and methods for pastors and churches.

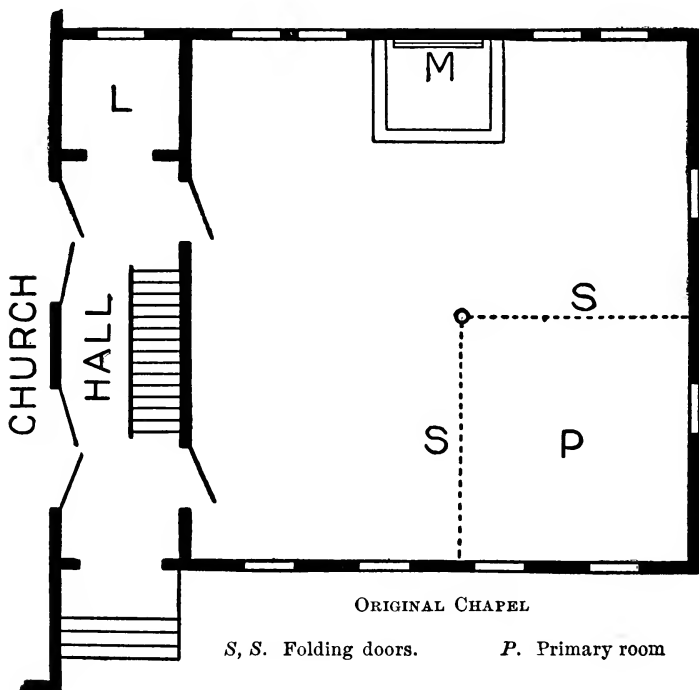
The Sunday School room is planned with radiating classrooms, so that the superintendent's platform is the focus of every eye.

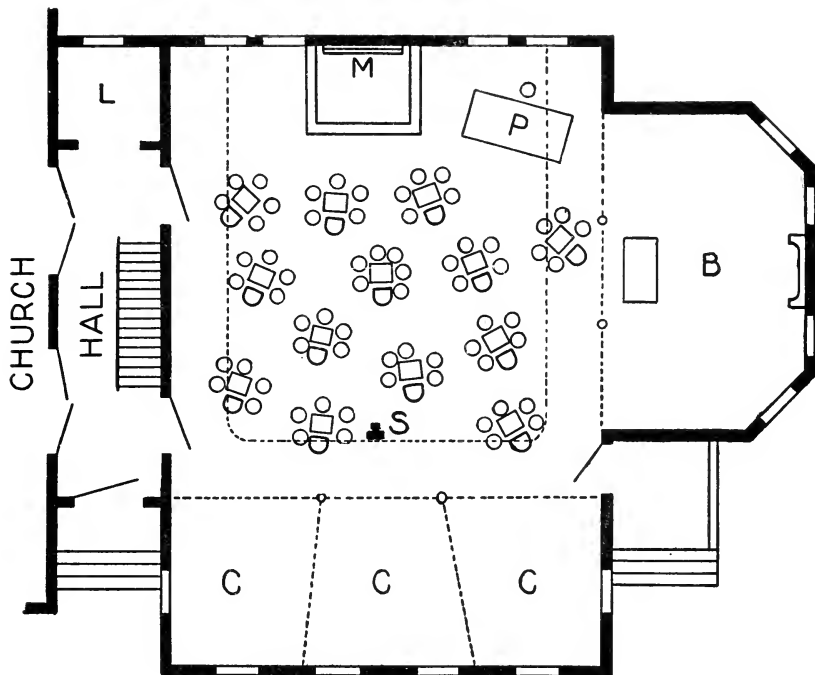
“When the panels of the screen are opened the speaker can survey the entire audiences of both rooms with choir and organ at his rear. Under the Sunday School are the dining halls, kitchen, and toilets. This arrangement will be understood more clearly by the accompanying plan.”

**A Plan for Remodelling Old Rooms.** — There are many instances in which the Sunday School and prayer-meeting

rooms are outgrown, but where they can be remodelled and adapted to the uses of both in greatly increased usefulness.

An example is given below of the change made in the Congregational chapel at Auburndale, Massachusetts (Ward IV of the city of Newton), as one instance of what may frequently be done. The former accommodations had been outgrown, and were transformed into a suite of rooms as nearly like the Akron plan as was possible under the circumstances.





THE CHAPEL AS REMODELLED

- B.* Bible class room on the main floor, with Primary room and ladies' parlor over it.
- C.* Six class rooms in two stories.
- S.* Stereopticon.
- M.* Cornice case for maps, stereopticon curtain, with blackboards beneath.
- P.* Piano and orchestra.

The added rooms are all separated from the main room by sliding or folding doors.

The light comes from the north windows, cathedral glass in the class-room doors, and from a skylight.

The ceiling was raised a few feet into the slant of the roof, in order to give height enough for two stories.

The main room, as well as the class rooms, is furnished with a table for each class.

The result has been not only a suite adapted to the Sunday School, but a most delightful room for the prayer-meeting, Sunday evening services, lectures, socials, and committees of every kind. It gives many cosy corners, and can be adapted to any size of audience.

What is needed still is another addition on the north side, opening into the main room, but separated by a double set of sliding doors to intercept the sounds, for the Primary classes, and for the Junior Endeavor, each of which needs a permanent room equipped especially for its own work.

**Additions for Large Schools.** — The Akron model school buildings, with many variations in detail, are the best yet devised for Sunday Schools of moderate numbers, up to several hundreds, and for a considerable proportion of scholars in the largest schools. But when a school is large enough to make each of the several grades a distinct school by itself, with sufficient members to give enthusiasm and interest to each grade without creating a loss in others, then certain additional rooms should be provided.

If the school is small, the separation brings a distinct loss, except in the case of the Primary department, which cannot do its best work in connection with the main school. I have known adult departments to suffer great loss, to be disaffected, to lose interest, because they were separated from the enthusiasm and methods of a flourishing Intermediate.

To quote from an article lately published in the *Church Economist* by Rev. E. Morris Fergusson, the indefatigable Sunday School secretary of New Jersey : —

“The Junior department is also rapidly coming into being under the leadership of primary workers; and it also demands and can profitably use a well-located separate room for the upper years of elementary Bible instruction. We have thus in operation a new principle of Sunday School work, the curriculum or progressive course of study, long advocated and essayed by leading Sunday School workers, but here, in the modern, well-organized Primary and Junior departments, embodied and standardized.

“For the Sunday School work of the incoming generation, therefore, we need to evolve a third type of building, of which the totally separate and perfectly situated and appointed department room shall be the distinctive factor. And that the undoubted gain of a periodic joining together of all parts in one great assembly may not be lost, these department rooms must connect, by wide passages and easy stairs, with that adequate, appropriate, and worshipfully suggestive gathering-place, the church auditorium; which might, by means of a solid but movable partition, be made capable of enlargement for such special occasions.”

Three plans of these large schools are given below.

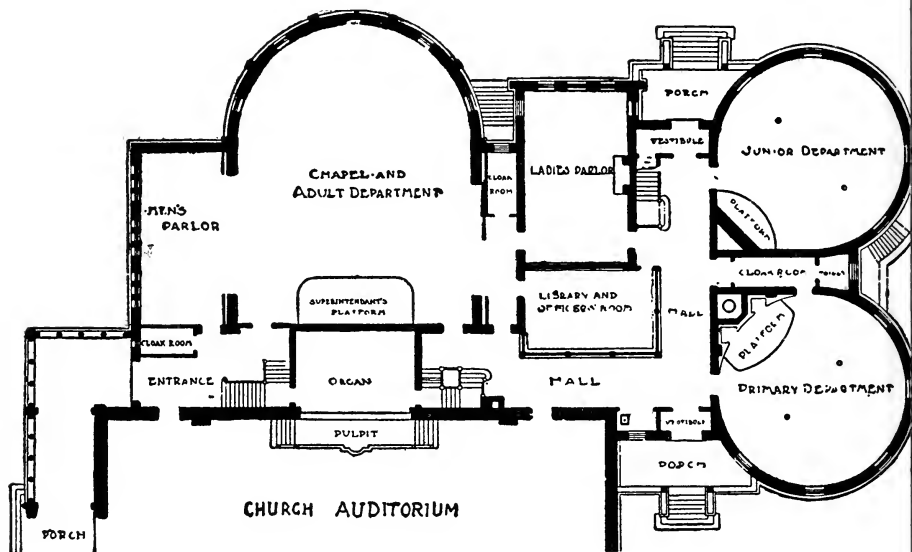
#### **The Kumler Memorial.**

This building is for a school with an enrolment of over 1000 members.

The Intermediate department is over the Junior, and the Senior over the Primary.

It will be noted from the plan on page 268 that it is built on the plan of segregation of its seven departments, no two of which can be thrown together. Its Primary and Junior departments can care for about 200 scholars each,

the Intermediate and Senior about 175 each. The Adult department can accommodate about 350 at one time, while the Normal department will hold 75, and the Chinese 50.



KUMLER MEMORIAL S. S. BUILDING—GROUND FLOOR.

EAST LIBERTY PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, PITTSBURG, PENNSYLVANIA.

When asked for his reasons for this segregation of departments Mr. Samuel E. Gill, the superintendent, replied to the *Pennsylvania Herald*:—

(1) "The trend of improvement in *teacher training* and *Sunday School methods* is in the line of specialization and separation, so as to adapt the entire service to the age and capacity of the pupil. Logically we should follow the same plan in our Sunday School architecture.



(2) "This plan enlists and develops a larger number of workers, making a more efficient force for the advancement of the Kingdom.

(3) "In large schools it enables the officers to maintain easily a much closer supervision of the work, secures better order, saves time, tends to thoroughness, and can be adapted to small schools to their very great advantage."

#### **Model Plan Combining all Departments.**

The arrangement is such that all the departments, as well as the class rooms, can be thrown together and every scholar be within view of the superintendent's desk.

The church auditorium is separated from the Sunday School room by a wide partition of sliding doors, which can be entirely removed from sight.

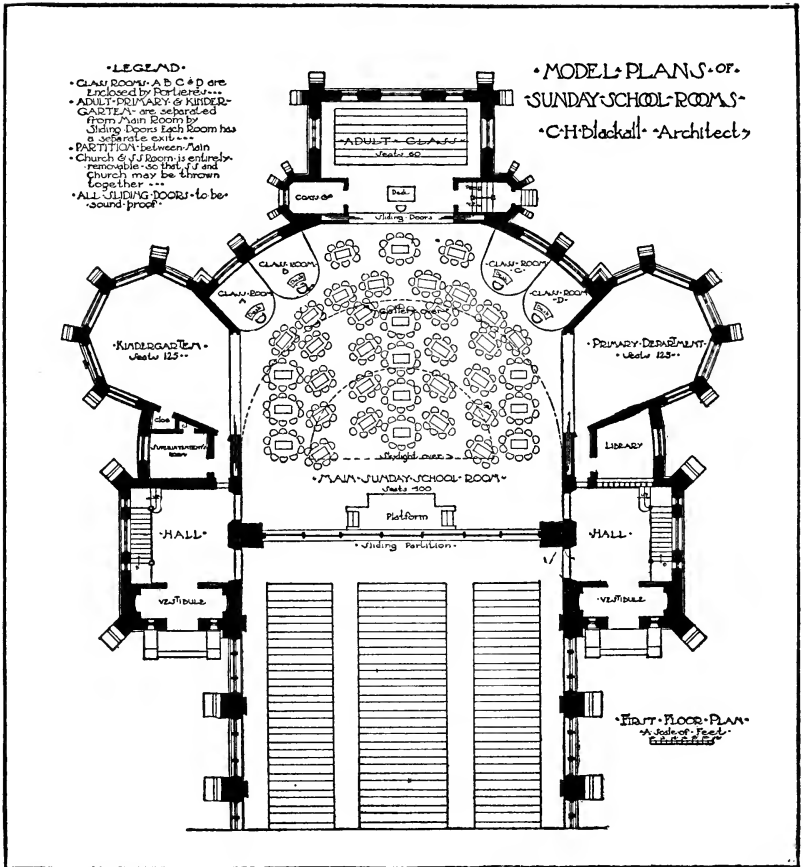
The class rooms *A*, *B*, *C*, *D* on the lower floor are enclosed by portières, making the main room, when desired, one open unobstructed auditorium.

The class rooms in the gallery (except *E* and *F*) are separated alternately with solid and with removable partitions, so that each pair can be thrown together for a large class if required, while in each one there is solid wall space for maps, blackboards, pictures, etc.

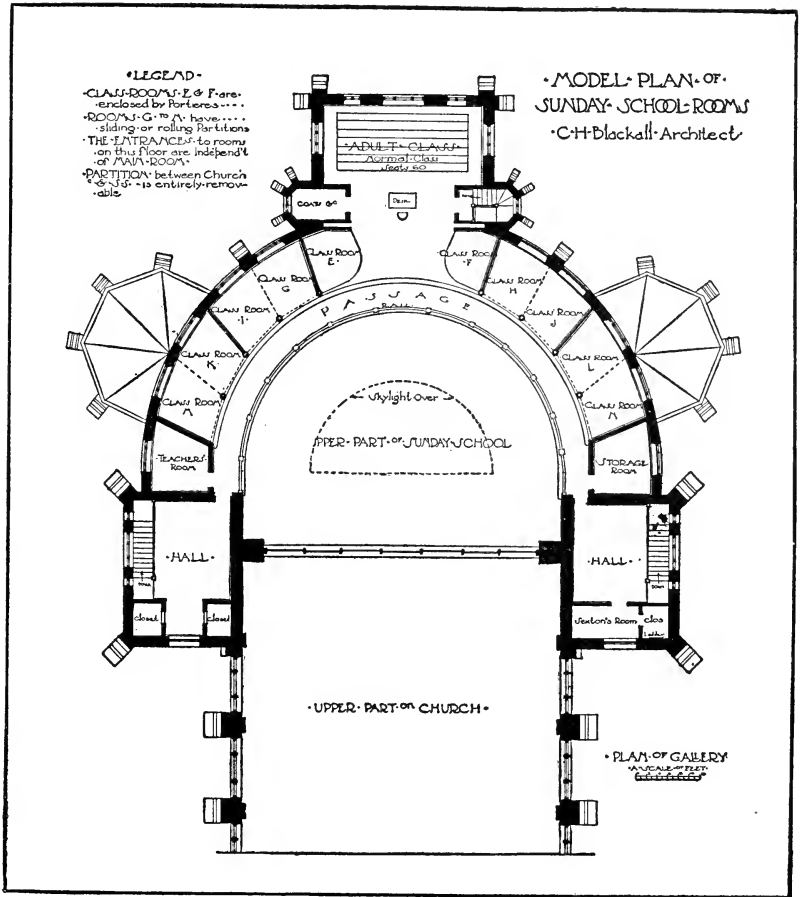
The kindergarten and primary rooms can be shut off from the main room by double sliding doors. All sliding doors to be sound proof.

Each department, the kindergarten, the primary, the upper and the lower senior rooms, and the upper series of class rooms, has its own separate exit independent of the main room.

The main room is equipped with chairs and tables for each class, and is lighted by a skylight.

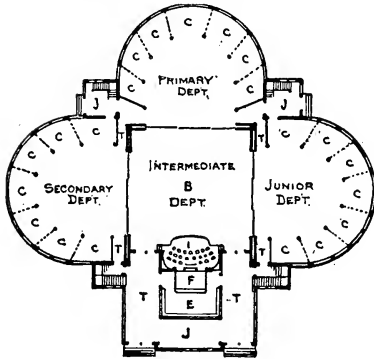


A model plan for Sunday School rooms, by C. H. Blackall, architect, 120 Beacon St., Boston.

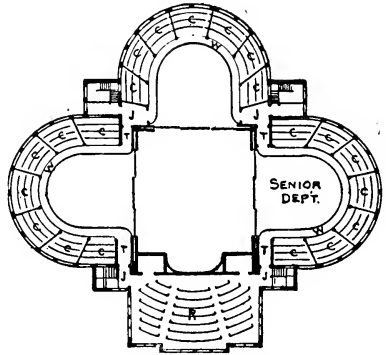


A model plan for Sunday School rooms, by C. H. Blackall, architect, 120 Beacon St., Boston.

### Separate Department Plan with Combinations.



GROUND FLOOR



GALLERIES AND CLASS ROOMS

Plan of separate department Sunday School room, by George W. Kramer, architect, New York.

In this plan all the departments open together in one large room.

Each department has its own class rooms.

The first floor is given entirely to the children; while the seniors are all in the second story in four departments, with sliding doors in front, except the large Bible-class room.

**The largest Sunday School in the World**, in the largest Sunday School building in the world, holding a membership of over 5000, is the Stockport Sunday School, in Stockport, a large city near Manchester, England. It stands on a hill in the centre of the city, and for more than a hundred years has been the Sunday School for all the children of the city of all denominations. There are a very large number of rooms, each the home of a separate class. There are larger rooms containing several classes. There is a great hall in which once a quarter the whole school assembles for general exercises. It is a kind of

“Institutional Sunday School,” with improvement societies, libraries, teachers’ meetings, and a great variety of interesting and peculiar methods. I know of no other instance where the Sunday School is the most prominent religious institution, if not institution of any kind, in a city of 100,000 inhabitants, and of which it could be said that “Sunday School scholars are the staple product of Stockport.”

**Class rooms.** See one described on page 52.

**Raised seats** like those in rear galleries are used in some schools in the second story but not generally, because while they are excellent when used as galleries to an audience room, they are not convenient for class rooms. They are sometimes used with good effect in Primary rooms, as, for instance, in the Sunday School at Stockport, England.

**Partitions between class rooms** are a matter of some importance.

1. Solid walls as usual in a house. The special advantages are that they prevent the class from hearing what is going on in the next room.

They make a homelike room, which can be used for class meetings, etc.

They give the best opportunity for maps, charts, blackboards, pictures, and book-racks for singing-books and Bibles, and all that is needed for the best teaching.

2. Rolling partitions, simple, enabling two rooms to be joined in one when a larger room is needed. Sometimes these are very useful, provided only two rooms adjoining are thus separated.

These partitions may be made to roll up or sideways, as most convenient.

**Class-room doors.**

1. In some cases the class rooms on the lower floor have no doors but are open recesses of the larger room. For instance, the great Bushwick Avenue M. E. Sunday School.

2. Rolling partitions, rolling up and down, or sideways, easy, simple, comparatively inexpensive, but allowing no light to come through for the main room.

The same, made with blackboard surface. Easily operated and durable.

3. Portières or curtains, which fairly well exclude the sounds of the main room, as in two schools in Brockton, Massachusetts, and the Congregational school in Montclair, New Jersey.

4. Shades on rollers, like window shades, only larger, large enough to cover the whole front of the room. Made of the same color as the tinting of the walls, they have much the same effect as part of the walls of the room. For example, the new Congregational Church of Nashua, New Hampshire.

5. Double folding doors, the panels of which are of cathedral or other kinds of glass which give light, but as also in the following methods.

6. Patent sliding and folding doors and partitions, easily operated, and requiring no pocket, and occupying almost none of the front space, are announced by Roof & Co., Franklin, Ohio.

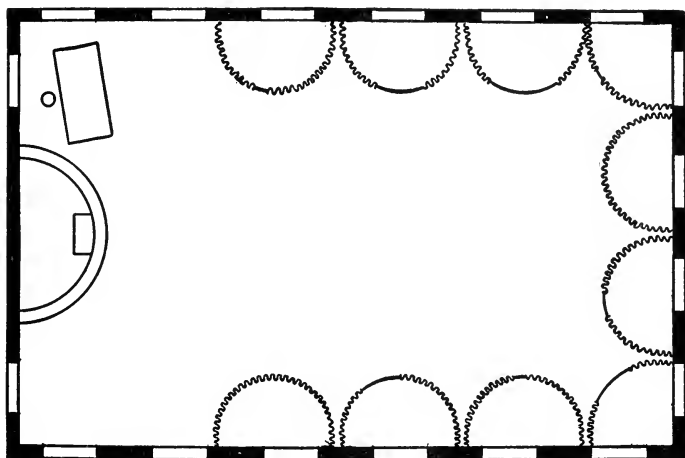
7. Sliding doors made in several ingenious ways, sometimes running into pockets, sometimes moving toward one side, and filling up a small part of the space.

8. Window partitions, hung like the windows of a house, but wider. Sometimes they run below into the

cellar, sometimes up into the attic, more often, divided into three sashes, they are raised up side by side to the top of the room, and hide the view from none.

These are best when they do not occupy the whole front, but a single door for easy entrance fills up the space at one side. This side door is a great convenience in all cases. In sliding or folding doors one of these takes the place of a separate door.

In all cases there should be ventilating windows over the whole front.



**Class Rooms made by Portières.** — A number of Sunday Schools make their class rooms by means of large, elongated semicircles of iron piping, on which are hung portières or curtains, something after the accompanying plan. When the curtains are drawn back during the opening and closing exercises, there is one large, open room. During class study the curtains are drawn around the

classes, and they are enabled to pursue their work undisturbed. These may be arranged in almost any room. They are said to be very satisfactory. The chief difficulty lies in the lack of the class home-feeling, and the absence of the best opportunity for the various maps, blackboards, and other equipment that the teacher needs.

Excellent examples may be found in the Congregational Church at Campello and the new M. E. Church of Brockton, Massachusetts.

**Class-room Substitutes.** — Where there is no opportunity for a full class-room equipment, there are substitutes of great value used in the ordinary simple rooms in the basement of the church. Some cosy nook or corner may be secluded by the portière arrangement, either on the iron piping frame, or on simple wires strung across the main room, as is done, at least was done a few years ago, in the great Sunday School of Mr. Moody's church in Chicago. In not a few Sunday Schools folding screens are used for separating the classes.

**The Seating.** — Chairs are the best for all purposes. There are several kinds which have book-racks and places underneath for hats. Where settees are used, some of them should be reversible and some should be short, so that the classes can be gathered around a common centre. Where there is no carpet, the chairs can easily be made noiseless by rubber tips.

**Tables.** — One of the greatest physical aids for the teacher is a table around which his class gathers as a focus. It should have a drawer deep and large enough to contain books, pencils, paper blocks, chalk, maps, and anything the teacher needs in his work. They are especially useful as a kind of desk, on which he can place his



Bible, Quarterly, written notes, etc., so as to leave his hands perfectly free for the teaching process. Some, instead of a drawer, have the top hinged, with a receptacle beneath. This gives more room, but is not quite so convenient as a drawer. Tables are made round or square or oblong. The latter kinds are more easily stowed away around the sides or in some corner, when the rooms are used for other purposes. These tables are of special use in sociables and receptions, as, for instance, to the Home Department. A prominent teacher once said to me that if she were compelled to make the choice, she would rather have a table without a class room than a class room without a table.

**Blackboards** are essential for many purposes. While the puzzle and alliterative methods of blackboard use are wisely declining, there is an increased use for notices, diagrams, records, subjects, reviews, etc. They are useful also for prayer-meetings, missionary meetings, Christian Endeavor, and in many cases.

Every class room should have one, in addition to more than one in the main room.

Portable blackboards of many sizes and arrangements for holding are very common.

But a series of boards behind the superintendent's desk is a far superior arrangement. These must run up and down in grooves, like window sashes.

The simplest arrangement consists of two boards connected by cords running over pulleys, so that when one goes up the other comes down. The writing is done within reach of the platform, and then the board is drawn up within sight of the whole school.

Another beautiful arrangement is that of the Dwight

Place Congregational Church at New Haven, Connecticut, where, in a panel behind the desk, are four large crayon boards, black, blue, green, and ground glass, hung like separate window sashes, any one of which can be brought into view at pleasure.

A very good arrangement especially for class rooms consists of two medium-sized blackboards hinged together, one of which is screwed to the wall. In this way there are three boards in the space of one, and when open the blackboard space is doubled.

Endless Flexible Blackboards are by far the most convenient of the portable blackboards. They consist of an endless wide band of blackboard cloth running over rollers at the top and bottom. Whatever is written on these can be moved up to the top in full sight, or run over behind out of sight. It gives double the amount of surface of an ordinary board. These blackboards are made in many styles and arrangements, walls on portable frames, and in a folding arrangement for lecturers to carry with them. These light arrangements are equally good and more convenient for common portable use. (American Blackboard Company, St. Louis.)

**Maps and charts** are best arranged on spring rollers in a cornice case which hides the maps when rolled up, but allows perfect ease in drawing down whichever one is needed.

**Special Arrangements.** — The following description from the *Congregationalist* is fuller than the notes I took when I visited the new Dwight Place Sunday School rooms at New Haven, Connecticut: —

“ Among the features are many wonderful contents of that double wall, which, like a magician’s palace, opens its treasures to the touch of secret springs. In the middle

are four large crayon boards, which may be drawn out at the will of the operator, — black, blue, green, or ground glass. Above this is a frame where nestle wonderful charts and song rolls, and to the right a large closet where are stored more song rolls hung conveniently for reference, and drawers for collections, books, and records. Here is a panel which swings down and becomes a baize board adjustable at any height or angle, and beside it a secret treasure house of objects and figures to be exhibited on it. On the other side a similar panel miraculously transforms itself into a sand table, and adjoining it a cupboard has galvanized iron drawers filled with damp clay and sand which may be used to illustrate anything from creation to the final judgment. Other panels conceal the music, the many-colored crayons and all possible devices to interest and instruct the little folks, who must come to regard this room as a veritable paradise.”

Some of these may be found in the Westminster Presbyterian Church in Bloomfield, New Jersey, together with a special interesting arrangement of sliding doors.

**The Newspaper Exchange** is a table with raised edges, placed in some convenient place in the vestibule or other entrance to the Sunday School rooms. Over it is placed in large letters —

NEWSPAPER EXCHANGE

Please bring the Religious papers, magazines,  
books, pamphlets

TAKE FREELY WHATEVER YOU WISH

This is free to everybody. The previous week's religious papers and good magazines of the previous month are brought in.

Once a month or so the young lady who has it in charge sends whatever is left to the hospitals or poorhouse or the places where men are at leisure waiting for work, as at engine houses, electric-car stations, etc.

**Attendance Tablets** are sometimes made permanent on one side of a blackboard. In other cases they are fixed separately upon the wall. There are several varieties of these, as well as of *Cradle Rolls*.

**Reference Library.** — This should be in the main room, free of access, never locked, with a supply of cards on which any one who takes a book writes his name and the date. It contains books on the Sunday School, on Teaching, on Missions, on Christian Endeavor, on the Bible, Cyclopedias, Concordance, Commentaries, etc. It should always be replenished whenever a new portion of the Bible is to be studied.

**Bible Museum.** — It would be a good thing for every school to get together whatever from Oriental countries illustrates the Bible. In many cases there are imitation coins, collections of seeds, woods, and flowers from Palestine, models of ancient tombs, of the Tabernacle and the Temple, like Fisher's model of Herod's Temple, with full description. One can gradually assemble many illustrative objects, as sandals, rolls, phylacteries, shepherd's rod and staff, clay tablets, seals, coins, grains, woods, ploughs, winnowing fans, etc. I find a great many times when I can bring to the Sunday School from my collection objects of interest that illustrate the lesson.

**A Stereopticon** is a good means of instructing and inter-

esting the children, and older people as well. It can be a permanent fixture, and wherever there is electricity, it can be run with ease at mid-day, and with real success. The oxyhydrogen lamps will also show pictures at the noon session, but require more care in the using. Missionary meetings, and special services and reviews, can use this instrument with great advantage.

**Pictures.** — The Sunday School room will be made more attractive, as well as helpful, by means of Bible pictures on the walls. A dado of the penny pictures can make a permanent history of the life of Christ, or of the Acts, or of the Old Testament story, around the main room, or any class room, but especially the Primary rooms. They can be, if desired, formed gradually as the lessons progress. W. A. Wilde and Company have a fine and growing selection of the best pictures illustrating the Bible.

The Wilde colorgraphs of great paintings are very beautiful for this purpose. A border of the Detroit colored photographs of Palestine scenes around one of my study doors has been greatly admired. The Sunday School, next to his own home, should be the most attractive and homelike place the child knows.

**The Card System of Enrolment** is the most convenient and time-saving method. "It is especially handy and time-saving in looking up statistics or keeping track of the active membership. All absentees or non-residents can be grouped by themselves, and the different grades may be classified by using cards of different colors, as *white* for Primary, *buff* for Intermediate, and *blue* for Senior members." The Pilgrim Press, Boston, furnishes an excellent outfit.

**For Individual Classes**, both at the school or at class

gatherings during the week, there are many interesting helps which can combine interest with instruction in the Bible.

**Stereoscopic Photographs** are again becoming popular, because the pictures are incomparably better than those of a few years ago. They are such lifelike representations of the places where our Lord lived and walked and taught, the figures and the scenes are brought out so clearly, that it is almost the same as if we were actually travelling in the Holy Land. People are more and more waking up to the likeness of the experiences that may be gained in the stereoscope to those gained by viewing them on the spot. The Underwoods of New York have some special features in this line.

**Games**, such as the Game of the Kings of the Jews (C. F. Marston, Worcester, Massachusetts), and Games of Bible Characters (Colby, Chicago), will in a few evenings give a better preparation than years of ordinary Bible study under any system of lessons in the Sunday School half hour, for such Bible knowledge as is given in the favorite tests which show up the ignorance of the Bible among the young people of to-day.

**The Royal Scroll** accomplishes the same purpose of intimate acquaintance with the facts and characters of the Bible, for the family circle and meetings of the class. I know children who have actually worn one out by constant and interested use. It is an ingenious and complete arrangement of maps, colored pictures, charts, descriptive of customs and modes of dress in Palestine, and an illuminated Life of Christ. Bishop Vincent voices the sentiment of many when he says: "It is a picture gallery, a panorama, a guide to sacred geography, a treasury of

sacred art, a text-book, an atlas, a lesson-help, all in one. It is the most ingenious, charming, and complete apparatus ever offered for the home."

**Teachers' Roll of Bible Illustrations** embodies in an excellent form, for use in the Sunday School class, the long list of illustrations made for Eyre and Spottiswoode's famous Variorum Bible.

**Working Methods.** — For a large number of administrative methods, and specimens of printed matter in actual use in progressive Sunday Schools, in various parts of the country, such as "Ways of awakening and maintaining interest in Bible study," "Ways of securing regular and punctual attendance," "Ways of reaching and securing new scholars," "Ways of securing Church attendance," etc., see Mead's *Modern Methods in Sunday School*.

Ruskin's *Seven Lamps of Architecture*, the lamp of Sacrifice, the lamp of Truth, the lamp of Power, the lamp of Beauty, the lamp of Life, the lamp of Memory, the lamp of Obedience, are excellent lamps, in the light of which Sunday School architecture may attain its highest usefulness and glory.

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